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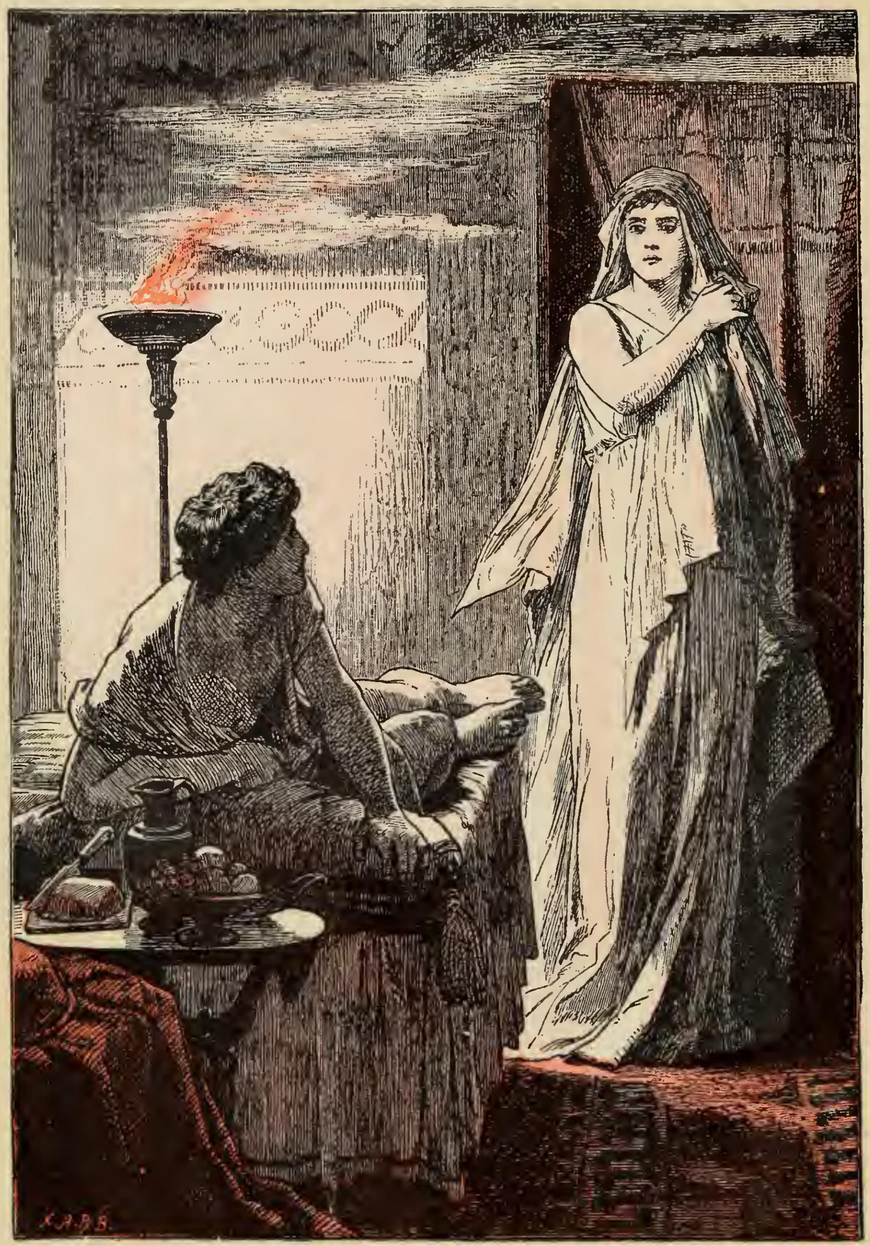

THE BRIDE OF CORINTH

—Ballads and Poems

HE COMPLETE WORKS OF
ohann Wolfgang von Goethe
N TEN VOLUMES

VOLUME V

POEMS

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THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
N TEN VOLUMES

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VOLUME V

POEMS

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POEMS OF GOETHE

Goethe—A Vol 5

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POEMS OF GOETHE.

DEDICATION.

I.

THE morning came. Its footsteps scared away
The gentle sleep that hovered lightly o'er me;
I left my quiet cot to greet the day,
And gayly climbed the mountain-side before me.
The sweet young flowers! how fresh were they and tender,
Brimful with dew upon the sparkling lea;
The young day opened in exulting splendor,
And all around seemed glad to gladden me.

II.

And, as I mounted, o'er the meadow ground
A white and filmy essence 'gan to hover;
It sailed and shifted till it hemmed me round,
Then rose above my head, and floated over.
No more I saw the beauteous scene unfolded —
It lay beneath a melancholy shroud;
And soon was I, as if in vapor moulded,
Alone, within the twilight of the cloud.

III.

At once, as though the sun were struggling through,
Within the mist a sudden radiance started;
Here sunk the vapor, but to rise anew,
There on the peak, and upland forest parted.

Oh, how I panted for the first clear gleaming,
Made by the gloom it banished doubly bright!
It came not, but a glory round me beaming,
And I stood blinded by the gush of light.

IV.

A moment, and I felt enforced to look,
By some strange impulse of the heart's emotion;
But more than one quick glance I scarce could brook,
For all was burning like a molten ocean.
There, in the glorious clouds that seemed to bear her,
A form angelic hovered in the air;
Ne'er did my eyes behold a vision fairer,
And still she gazed upon me, floating there.

V.

"Dost thou not know me?" and her voice was soft
As truthful love, and holy calm it sounded.
"Know'st thou not me, who many a time and oft
Poured balsam in thy hurts when sorest wounded?
Ah, well thou knowest her, to whom forever
Thy heart in union pants to be allied!
Have I not seen the tears—the wild endeavor
That even in boyhood brought me to thy side?"

VI.

"Yes! I have felt thy influence oft," I cried,
And sank on earth before her, half-adoring;
"Thou brought'st me rest when passion's lava tide
Thro' my young veins like liquid fire was pouring.
And thou hast fanned, as with celestial pinions,
In summer's heat, my parched and fevered brow;
Gav'st me the choicest gifts of earth's dominions,
And, save through thee, I seek no fortune now.

VII.

"I name thee not, but I have heard thee named,
And heard thee styled their own ere now by many;
All eyes believe at thee their glance is aimed,
Though thine effulgence is too great for any.

Ah! I had many comrades whilst I wandered —
  I know thee now, and stand almost alone:
I veil thy light, too precious to be squandered,
  And share the inward joy I feel with none."

VIII.

Smiling, she said — "Thou seest 'twas wise from thee
  To keep the fuller, greater revelation:
Scarce art thou from grotesque delusions free,
  Scarce master of thy childish first sensation;
Yet deem'st thyself so far above thy brothers,
  That thou hast won the right to scorn them! Cease.
Who made the yawning gulf 'twixt thee and others?
  Know — know thyself — live with the world in peace."

IX.

"Forgive me!" I exclaimed, "I meant no ill,
  Else should in vain my eyes be disenchanted;
Within my blood there stirs a genial will —
  I know the worth of all that thou hast granted.
That boon I hold in trust for others merely,
  Nor shall I let it rust within the ground;
Why sought I out the pathway so sincerely,
  If not to guide my brothers to the bound?"

X.

And as I spoke, upon her radiant face
  Passed a sweet smile, like breath across a mirror,
And in her eyes' bright meaning I could trace
  What I had answered well, and what in error.
She smiled, and then my heart regained its lightness,
  And bounded in my breast with rapture high:
Then durst I pass within her zone of brightness,
  And gaze upon her with unquailing eye.

XI.

Straightway she stretched her hand among the thin
  And watery haze that round her presence hovered;
Slowly it coiled and shrunk her grasp within,
  And lo! the landscape lay once more uncovered —

Again mine eye could scan the sparkling meadow,
  I looked to heaven, and all was clear and bright;
I saw her hold a veil without a shadow,
  That undulated round her in the light.

XII.

"I know thee! — all thy weakness, all that yet
  Of good within thee lives and glows, I've measured;"
She said — her voice I never may forget —
  "Accept the gift that long for thee was treasured.
Oh! happy he, thrice-blessed in earth and heaven,
  Who takes this gift with soul serene and true,
The veil of song, by Truth's own fingers given,
  Enwoven of sunshine and the morning dew.

XIII.

"Wave but this veil on high, whene'er beneath
  The noonday fervor thou and thine are glowing,
And fragrance of all flowers around shall breathe,
  And the cool winds of eve come freshly blowing.
Earth's cares shall cease for thee, and all its riot;
  Where gloomed the grave, a starry couch be seen;
The waves of life shall sink in halcyon quiet;
  The days be lovely fair, the nights serene."

XIV.

Come then, my friends, and whether 'neath the load
  Of heavy griefs ye struggle on, or whether
Your better destiny shall strew the road
  With flowers, and golden fruits that cannot wither,
United let us move, still forward striving;
  So while we live shall joy our days illume,
And in our children's hearts our love surviving
  Shall gladden them, when we are in the tomb.

A. M.

TO THE KIND READER.

No one talks more than a poet;
Fain he'd have the people know it,
  Praise or blame he ever loves;
None in prose confess an error,
Yet we do so, void of terror,
  In the Muses' silent groves.

What I erred in, what corrected,
What I suffered, what effected,
  To this wreath as flowers belong;
For the aged and the youthful,
And the vicious and the truthful,
  All are fair when viewed in song.

◆

SOUND, SWEET SONG.

Sound, sweet song, from some far land,
Sighing softly close at hand,
  Now of joy, and now of woe!
  Stars are wont to glimmer so.
Sooner thus will good unfold;
Children young and children old
  Gladly hear thy numbers flow.

◆

THE MODERN AMADIS.

They kept me guarded close, while yet
  A little tiny elf,
And so I sat, and did beget
  A world within myself,
All I cared to see.

Golden fancy then unfurled
Endless sights to me,
And a gallant knight I grew;
Like the Prince Pipi,
Roamed throughout the world.

Many a crystal palace saw,
Many overthrew;
My far-flashing falchion hurled
Through the dragon's maw.
Ha! then I was a man!

Next I freed in knightly wise
The Princess Periban;
Oh, the wonder of her eyes,
Smiling, as I wooed
Her with hearted sighs!

Her kiss, it was ambrosial food,
Glowed like noble wine;
With love, oh, I was almost dead!
A golden haze divine
She around her shed.

Who has torn her from my sight?
Can no spell delay
That dear vision, stay her flight?
Where her home, oh, say?
And thither, which the way?

◆

WHEN THE FOX DIES HIS SKIN COUNTS.*

We young people in the shade
Sat one sultry day;
Cupid came, and "Dies the Fox"
With us sought to play.

---

* The name of a game known in English as "Jack's alight."

Each one of my friends then sat
By his mistress dear;
Cupid, blowing out the torch,
Said: "The taper's here!"

Then we quickly sent around
The expiring brand;
Each one put it hastily
In his neighbor's hand.

Dorilis then gave it me,
With a scoffing jest;
Sudden into flame it broke,
By my fingers pressed.

And it singed my eyes and face,
Set my breast on fire;
Then above my head the blaze
Mounted ever higher.

Vain I sought to put it out;
Ever burned the flame;
'Stead of dying, soon the Fox
Livelier still became.

◆

THE COQUETTE.

O'er the meadows tripped sweet Kitty,
On a dewy morn in spring,
Like a lark, her blithesome ditty
Gayly, lightly carolling,
So la la! Le ralla.

Lubin, as she passed beside him,
Offered two lambs for a kiss;
Roguishly awhile she eyed him,
Tripped away, then carolled this,
So la la! Le ralla.

Ribbons red young Colin proffers,
Robin with his heart would wile,
But she mocks at all their offers,
Singing, as she mounts the stile,
So la la! Le ralla!

◆

THE WILD ROSE.

A BOY espied, in morning light,
A little rosebud blowing;
'Twas so delicate and bright,
That he came to feast his sight,
And wonder at its growing.
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud brightly blowing!

"I will gather thee," — he cried —
"Rosebud brightly glowing!"
"Then I'll sting thee," it replied,
"And you'll quickly start aside
With the prickle glowing."
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud brightly blowing!

But he plucked it from the plain,
The rosebud brightly blowing!
It turned and stung him, but in vain —
He regarded not the pain,
Homeward with it going.
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud brightly blowing!

◆

THE BREEZE.

THE mists they are scattered,
The blue sky looks brightly,
And Eolus looses
The wearisome chain!

The winds, how they whistle!
The steersman is busy—
Hillio-ho, hillio-ho!
We dash through the billows—
They flash far behind us—
Land, land, boys, again!

◆

BLINDMAN'S BUFF.

Oh, my Theresa dear!
Thine eyes I greatly fear
  Can through the bandage see!
Although thine eyes are bound,
By thee I'm quickly found,
  And wherefore shouldst thou catch but me?

Ere long thou held'st me fast,
With arms around me cast,
  Upon thy breast I fell;
Scarce was thy bandage gone,
When all my joy was flown,
  Thou coldly didst the blind repel.

He groped on every side,
His limbs he sorely tried,
  While scoffs arose all round;
If thou no love wilt give,
In sadness I shall live,
  As if mine eyes remained still bound.

◆

CHRISTEL.

My senses ofttimes are oppressed,
  Oft stagnant is my blood;
But when by Christel's sight I'm blest
  I feel my strength renewed.

I see her here, I see her there,
And really cannot tell
The manner how, the when, the where,
The why I love her well.

If with the merest glance I view
Her black and roguish eyes,
And gaze on her black eyebrows too,
My spirit upward flies.
Has any one a mouth so sweet,
Such love-round cheeks as she?
Ah, when the eye her beauties meet,
It ne'er content can be.

And when in airy German dance
I clasp her form divine,
So quick we whirl, so quick advance,
What rapture then like mine!
And when she's giddy, and feels warm,
I cradle her, poor thing,
Upon my breast, and in mine arm,—
I'm then a very king!

And when she looks with love of me,
Forgetting all but this,
When pressed against my bosom, she
Exchanges kiss for kiss,
All through my marrow runs a thrill,
Runs e'en my foot along!
I feel so well, I feel so ill,
I feel so weak, so strong!

Would that such moments ne'er would end!
The day ne'er long I find;
Could I the night too with her spend,
E'en then I should not mind.
If she were in mine arms but held,
To quench love's thirst I'd try;
And could my torments not be quell'd,
Upon her breast would die.

SMITTEN.

Through the wood as I was roaming,
There a gentle youth I spied,
Piping sweetly in the gloaming,
Till the rocks around replied,
So la la!

And beside him down he drew me,
Called me fair, and kissed me then.
"Pipe once more!" I said, and through me
Thrilled his music sweet again.
So la la!

Now my peace is flown, and never
Comes a smile into mine eye,
And within my ears for ever
Rings that music, and I sigh,
So la la!

◆

RESERVATION.

My maiden she proved false to me;
To hate all joys I soon began,
Then to a flowing stream I ran,—
The stream ran past me hastily.

There stood I fixed, in mute despair;
My head swam round as in a dream;
I well-nigh fell into the stream,
And earth seemed with me whirling there.

Sudden I heard a voice that cried —
I had just turned my face from thence —
It was a voice to charm each sense:
"Beware, for deep is yonder tide!"

A thrill my blood pervaded now,
I looked, and saw a beauteous maid; —
I asked her name — 'twas Kate, she said —
"Oh, lovely Kate! how kind art thou!

"From death I have been saved by thee,
'Tis through thee only that I live;
Little 'twere life alone to give,
My joy in life then deign to be!"

And then I told my sorrows o'er,
Her eyes to earth she sweetly threw;
I kissed her, and she kissed me too,
And — then I talked of death no more.

◆

RESOLVE.

On, on across the plains and feel no dread!
Where not the boldest hath
Trod down a path, which thou may'st safely tread,
Make for thyself a path!

Still thou my heart, dear love! It will not break
Though bent awhile it be;
And if it needs must be, that it shall break,
It breaks not, love, with thee.

◆

TREASURE TROVE.

Through the forest idly,
As my steps I bent,
With a free and happy heart,
Singing as I went.

Cowering in the shade I
Did a floweret spy,
Bright as any star in heaven,
Sweet as any eye.

Down to pluck it stooping,
Thus to me it said,
"Wherefore pluck me only
To wither and to fade?"

Up with its roots I dug it,
I bore it as it grew,
And in my garden-plot at home
I planted it anew;

All in a still and shady place,
Beside my home so dear,
And now it thanks me for my pains
And blossoms all the year.

◆

THE MUSES' SON.

[Goethe quotes the beginning of this song in his *Autobiography*, as expressing the manner in which his poetical effusions used to pour out from him.]

Through field and wood to stray
And pipe my tuneful lay,—
'Tis thus my days are passed;
And all keep tune with me,
And move on in harmony,
And so on, to the last.

To wait I scarce have power
The garden's earliest flower.
The tree's first bloom in spring;
They hail my joyous strain,—
When winter comes again,
Of that sweet dream I sing.

My song sounds far and near,
O'er ice it echoes clear,
Then winter blossoms bright;
And when his blossoms fly,
Fresh raptures meet mine eye,
Upon the well-tilled height.

When 'neath the linden tree,
Young folks I chance to see,
I set them moving soon;
His nose the dull lad curls,
The formal maiden whirls,
Obedient to my tune.

Wings to the feet ye lend,
O'er hill and vale ye send
The lover far from home;
When shall I, on your breast,
Ye kindly Muses, rest,
And cease at length to roam?

◆

RECIPROCAL INVITATION TO THE DANCE.

THE INDIFFERENT.

Come to the dance with me, come with me, fair one!
Dances a feast-day like this may well crown;
If thou my sweetheart art not, thou canst be so,
But if thou wilt not, we still will dance on.
Come to the dance with me, come with me, fair one!
Dances a feast-day like this may well crown.

THE TENDER.

Loved one, without thee, what then would all feasts be?
Sweet one, without thee, what then were the dance?
If thou my sweetheart wert not, I would dance not,
If thou art still so, all life is one feast,
Loved one, without thee, what then would the feast be?
Sweet one, without thee, what then were the dance?

THE INDIFFERENT.

Let them but love then, and leave us the dancing!
Languishing love cannot bear the glad dance.
Let us whirl round in the waltz's gay measure,
And let *them* steal to the dim-lighted wood.
Let them but love, then, and leave us the dancing!
Languishing love cannot bear the glad dance.

THE TENDER.

Let them whirl round, then, and leave us to wander!
Wand'ring to love is a heavenly dance.
Cupid, the near one, o'erhears their deriding,
Vengeance takes suddenly, vengeance takes soon.
Let them whirl round, then, and leave us to wander!
Wand'ring to love is a heavenly dance.

LIKE AND LIKE.

A FAIR bell-flower
Sprang up from the ground,
And early its fragrance
It shed all around;
A bee came thither
And sipped from its bell;—
That they for each other
Were made, we see well.

◆

SELF-DECEIT.

MY neighbor's curtain, well I see,
Is moving to and fro.
No doubt she's listening eagerly,
If I'm at home or no,

And if the jealous grudge I bore
And openly confessed;
Is nourished by me as before,
Within my inmost breast.

Alas! no fancies such as these
E'er crossed the dear child's thoughts.
I see 'tis but the evening breeze
That with the curtain sports.

◆

DECLARATION OF WAR.

OH, would I resembled
The country girls fair,
Who rosy-red ribbons
And yellow hats wear!

To believe I was pretty
I thought was allowed;
In the town I believed it
When by the youth vowed.

Now that spring hath returned,
  All my joys disappear;
The girls of the country
  Have lured him from here.

To change dress and figure,
  Was needful, I found,
My bodice is longer,
  My petticoat round.

My hat now is yellow,
  My bodice like snow;
The clover to sickle
  With others I go.

Something pretty, ere long
  Midst the troop he explores;
The eager boy signs me
  To go within doors.

I bashfully go, —
  Who I am, he can't trace;
He pinches my cheeks,
  And he looks in my face.

The town girl now threatens
  You maidens with war;
Her twofold charms pledges
  Of victory are.

◆

LOVER IN ALL SHAPES.

To be like a fish,
Brisk and quick is my wish;
If thou cam'st with thy line,
Thou wouldst soon make me thine,
To be like a fish,
Brisk and quick is my wish.

Oh, were I a steed!
Thou wouldst love me indeed.
Oh, were I a car

Fit to bear thee afar!
Oh, were I a steed!
Thou wouldst love me indeed.

I would I were gold
That thy finger might hold!
If thou boughtest aught then,
I'd return soon again.
I would I were gold
That thy fingers might hold!

I would I were true,
And my sweetheart still new!
To be faithful I'd swear,
And would go away ne'er.
I would I were true,
And my sweetheart still new!

I would I were old,
And wrinkled and cold,
So that if thou said'st No,
I could stand such a blow!
I would I were old,
And wrinkled and cold.

An ape I would be,
Full of mischievous glee;
If aught came to vex thee,
I'd plague and perplex thee.
An ape I would be,
Full of mischievous glee.

As a lamb I'd behave,
As a lion be brave,
As a lynx clearly see,
As a fox cunning be.
As a lamb I'd behave,
As a lion be brave.

Whatever I were,
All on *thee* I'd confer
With the gifts of a prince

My affection evince.
Whatever I were,
All on *thee* I'd confer.

As nought diff'rent can make me,
As I *am* thou must take me!
If I'm not good enough,
Thou must cut thine own stuff.
As nought diff'rent can make me,
As I *am* thou must take me!

◆

THE GOLDSMITH'S APPRENTICE.

My neighbor, none can e'er deny,
  Is a most beauteous maid;
Her shop is ever in mine eye,
  When working at my trade.

To ring and chain I hammer then
  The wire of gold assayed,
And think the while; "For Kate, oh, when
  Will such a ring be made?"

And when she takes her shutters down,
  Her shop at once invade,
To buy and haggle, all the town,
  For all that's there displayed.

I file, and maybe overfile
  The wire of gold assayed,
My master grumbles all the while,—
  Her shop the mischief made.

To ply her wheel she straight begins
  When not engaged in trade;
I know full well for what she spins,—
  'Tis hope guides that dear maid.

Her leg, while her small foot treads on,
  Is in my mind portrayed;
Her garter I recall anon,—
  I gave it that dear maid.

Then to her lips the finest thread
  Is by her hand conveyed.
Were *I* there only in its stead,
  How I would kiss the maid!

◆

ANSWERS IN A GAME OF QUESTIONS.

THE LADY.

In the small and great world too,
  What most charms a woman's heart?
It is doubtless what is new,
  For its blossoms joy impart;
Nobler far is what is true,
  For fresh blossoms it can shoot
  Even in the time of fruit.

THE YOUNG GENTLEMAN.

With the nymphs in wood and cave
  Paris was acquainted well,
Till Zeus sent, to make him rave,
  Three of those in Heaven who dwell;
And the choice more trouble gave
  Than e'er fell to mortal lot,
  Whether in old times or not.

THE EXPERIENCED.

Tenderly a woman view,
  And thou'lt win her, take my word
He who's quick and saucy too,
  Will of all men be preferred;
Who ne'er seems as if he knew
  If he pleases, if he charms,—
  He 'tis injures, he 'tis harms.

THE CONTENTED.

Manifold is human strife,
  Human passion, human pain;
Many a blessing yet is rife,
  Many pleasures still remain.

Yet the greatest bliss in life,
And the richest prize we find,
Is a good, contented mind.

THE MERRY COUNSEL.

He by whom man's foolish will
Is each day reviewed and blamed,
Who, when *others* fools are still,
Is himself a fool proclaimed, —
Ne'er at mill was beast's back pressed
With a heavier load than he.
What I feel within my breast
That in truth's the thing for me!

◆

DIFFERENT EMOTIONS ON THE SAME SPOT.

THE MAIDEN.

I've seen him before me!
What rapture steals o'er me
Oh heavenly sight!
He's coming to meet me;
Perplexed, I retreat me,
With shame take to flight.
My mind seems to wander!
Ye rocks and trees yonder,
Conceal ye my rapture,
Conceal my delight!

THF YOUTH.

'Tis here I must find her,
'Twas here she enshrined her,
Here vanished from sight.
She came, as to meet me,
Then fearing to greet me,
With shame took to flight.
Is't hope? Do I wander?
Ye rocks and trees yonder,
Disclose ye the loved one,
Disclose my delight!

THE LANGUISHING.

O'er my sad fate I sorrow,
To each dewy morrow,
Veiled here from man's sight.
By the many mistaken,
Unknown and forsaken,
Here wing I my flight!
Compassionate spirit!
Let none ever hear it, —
Conceal my affliction,
Conceal thy delight!

THE HUNTER.

To-day I'm rewarded;
Rich booty's afforded
By Fortune so bright.
My servant, the pheasants,
And hares fit for presents,
Takes homeward at night;
Here see I enraptured
In nets the birds captured! —
Long life to the hunter!
Long live his delight!

◆

THE MISANTHROPE.

At first awhile sits he,
With calm, unruffled brow;
His features then I see,
Distorted hideously, —
An owl's they might be now.
What is it, asketh thou?
Is't love, or is't ennui ?
'Tis both at once, I vow.

◆

Late resounds the early strain;
Weal and woe in song remain.

DIFFERENT THREATS.

I once into a forest far
My maiden went to seek,
And fell upon her neck, when: "Ah!"
She threatened, "I will shriek!"

Then cried I haughtily: "I'll crush
The man that dares come near thee!"
"Hush!" whispered she: "my loved one, hush,
Or else they'll overhear thee!"

◆

WHO'LL BUY CUPID?

Of all the wares so pretty
That come into the city,
There's none are so delicious,
There's none are half so precious,
As those which we are bringing.
O, listen to our singing!
Young loves to sell? young loves to sell!
My pretty loves who'll buy?

First look you at the oldest,
The wantonest, the boldest!
So loosely goes he hopping,
From tree and thicket dropping,
Then flies aloft so sprightly!
We dare but praise him lightly!
The fickle rogue! Young loves to sell!
My pretty loves who'll buy?

Now see this little creature —
How modest seems his feature!
He nestles so demurely,
You'd think him safer surely;
And yet for all his shyness,
There's danger in his slyness,
The cunning rogue! Young loves to sell!
My pretty loves who'll buy?

Oh, come and see this lovelet,
This little turtle-dovelet!
The maidens that are neatest,
The tenderest and sweetest,
Should buy it to amuse 'em,
And nurse it in their bosom.
The little pet! Young loves to sell!
My pretty loves who'll buy?

We need not bid you buy them,
They're here, if you will try them.
They like to change their cages;
But for their proving sages
No warrant will we utter —
They all have wings to flutter,
The pretty things! Young loves to sell!
Such beauties! Come and buy!

TRUE ENJOYMENT.

VAINLY wouldst thou, to gain a heart,
  Heap up a maiden's lap with gold;
The joys of love thou must impart,
  Wouldst thou e'er see those joys unfold.
The voices of the throng gold buys.
  No single heart 'twill win for thee;
Wouldst thou a maiden make thy prize,
  Thyself alone the bribe must be.

If by no sacred tie thou'rt bound,
  Oh, youth, thou must thyself restrain!
Well may true liberty be found,
  Though man may seem to wear a chain.
Let one alone inflame thee e'er,
  And if her heart with love o'erflows,
Let tenderness unite you there,
  If duty's self no fetter knows.

First *feel*, oh, youth! A girl then find
  Worthy thy choice, — let *her* choose thee,
In body fair, and fair in mind,
  And then thou wilt be blest, like me.

I who have made this art mine own,
  A girl have chosen such as this;
The blessing of the priest alone
  Is wanting to complete our bliss.

Nought but my rapture is her guide,
  Only for me she cares to please,—
Ne'er wanton save when by my side,
  And modest when the world she sees
That time our glow may never chill,
  She yields no right through frailty;
Her favor is a favor still,
  And I must ever grateful be.

Yet I'm content, and full of joy,
  If she'll but grant her smile so sweet,
Or if at table she'll employ,
  To pillow hers, her lover's feet,
Give me the apple that she bit,
  The glass from which she drank, bestow
And when my kiss so orders it,
  Her bosom, veiled till then, will show.

And when she wills of love to speak,
  In fond and silent hours of bliss,
Words from her mouth are all I seek,
  Naught else I crave,—not e'en a kiss.
With what a soul her mind is fraught,
  Wreathed round with charms unceasingly
She's perfect,—and she fails in nought
  Save in her deigning to love me.

My reverence throws me at her feet,
  My longing throws me on her breast;
This, youth, is rapture true and sweet;
  Be wise, *thus* seeking to be blest.
When death shall take thee from her side,
  To join th' angelic choir above,
In heaven's bright mansions to abide,—
  No diff'rence at the change thou'lt prove.

MAIDEN WISHES.

WHAT pleasure to me
A bridegroom would be!
When married we are,
They call us mamma.
No need then to sew,
To school we ne'er go;
Command uncontrolled,
Have maids whom to scold;
Choose clothes at our ease,
Of what tradesmen we please;
Walk freely about,
And go to each rout,
And unrestrained are
By papa or mamma.

◆

THE FAREWELL.

[Probably addressed to his mistress Frederica.]

LET mine eye the farewell say,
  That my lips can utter ne'er;
Fain I'd be a man to-day,
  Yet 'tis hard, oh, hard to bear!

Mournful in an hour like this
  Is love's sweetest pledge, I ween;
Cold upon thy mouth the kiss,
  Faint thy fingers' pressure e'en.

Oh, what rapture to my heart
  Used each stolen kiss to bring!
As the violets joy impart,
  Gathered in the early spring.

Now no garlands I entwine,
  Now no roses pluck for thee,
Though 'tis springtime, Fanny mine,
  Dreary autumn 'tis to me!

MOTIVES.

If to a girl who loves us truly
Her mother gives instruction duly
In virtue, duty, and what not,—
And if she hearkens ne'er a jot,
But with fresh-strengthened longing flies
To meet our kiss that seems to burn,—
Caprice has just as much concern
As love in her bold enterprise.

But if her mother can succeed
In gaining for her maxims heed,
And softening the girl's heart too,
So that she coyly shuns our view,—
The heart of youth she knows but ill;
For when a maiden is thus stern,
Virtue in truth has less concern
In this, than an inconstant will.

THE LOVELY NIGHT.

From the cot, where softly sleeping
Lies my bosom's love, I go,
And with noiseless footstep creeping,
Thread the dusky wood, when lo!
Bursts the moon through glade and greenwood,
Soft the herald zephyrs play,
And the waving birches sprinkle
Sweetest incense on my way.

How I revel in the coolness
Of this beauteous summer night
Stilly dreaming here the fulness
Of the panting soul's delight!
Words can paint not what my bliss is,
Yet, kind heaven, I'd yield to thee
Nights a thousand, fair as this is,
Would my love give one to me!

LOVE'S DREAM.

Thou oft in dreams hast seen us stand
Before the altar hand in hand,
Thyself the bride, the bridegroom I.
Oft on thy lips, when none were watching,
I've hung, unnumbered kisses snatching,
In hours of waking ecstasy.

The purest rapture that we cherished,
The bliss of hours so golden, perished
Even with the hour that saw it rise.
What reck that mine have been such blisses?
Fleeting as dreams are fondest kisses,
And like a kiss all pleasure dies.

◆

LIVING REMEMBRANCE.

Half vexed, half pleased, thy love will feel,
Shouldst thou her knot or ribbon steal;
To thee they're much — I won't conceal;
  Such self-deceit may pardoned be;
A veil, a kerchief, garter, rings,
In truth are no more trifling things,
  But still they're not enough for me.

She who is dearest to my heart,
Gave me, with well dissembled smart,
Of her own life a living part,
  No charm in aught beside I trace;
How do I scorn thy paltry ware!
A lock she gave me of the hair
  That wantons o'er her beauteous face.

If, loved one, we must severed be,
Wouldst thou not wholly fly from me,
I still possess this legacy,
  To look at, and to kiss in play,—
My fate is to the hair's allied,
We used to woo her with like pride,
  And now we both are far away.

Her charms with equal joy we pressed,
Her smiling cheeks anon caressed,
Lured onward by a yearning blest,
  Upon her heaving bosom fell.
Oh, rival, free from envy's sway,
Thou precious gift, thou beauteous prey,
  Remain my joy and bliss to tell!

◆

THE BLISS OF ABSENCE.

'Tis sweet for him, the livelong day that lies,
Wrapt in the heaven of his dear lady's eyes,
  Whose dreams her image blesseth evermore,
Love knoweth not a sharper joy than this,
Yet greater, purer, nobler is the bliss,
  To be afar from her whom we adore!

Distance and Time, eternal powers, that be
Still, like the stars, o'erruling secretly,
  Cradle this tempest of the blood to peace.
Calm grows my soul, and calmer every hour,
Yet daily feels my heart a springing power,
  And daily finds my happiness increase.

All times she lives within my heart and brain,
Yet can I think of her without a pain,
  My spirit soars away serene and free,
And, by the strength of its divine emotion,
Transforms its love to all a saint's devotion,
  Refines desire into idolatry.

The lightest cloudlet that doth fleck the sky,
And floats along the sunshine airily,
  More lightly in its beauty floateth never,
Than doth my heart, with tranquil joy elate.
By fear untouched, for jealousy too great,
  I love, oh, yes, I love — I love her ever.

TO LUNA.

Sister of the earliest light,
Type of loveliness in sorrow,
Silver mists thy radiance borrow,
Even as they cross thy sight.
When thou comest to the sky,
In their dusky hollows waken,
Spirits that are sad, forsaken,
Birds that shun the day, and I.

Looking downward far and wide,
Hidden things thou dost discover.
Luna! help a hapless lover,
Lift him kindly to thy side!
Aided by thy friendly beams,
Let him, through the lattice peeping,
Look into the room where, sleeping,
Lies the maiden of his dreams.

Ah, I see her! Now I gaze,
Bending in a trance Elysian,
And I strain my inmost vision,
And I gather all thy rays.
Bright and brighter yet I see
Charms no envious robes encumber;
[illegible] And she draws me to her slumber
As Endymion once drew thee.

◆

THE WEDDING NIGHT.

Within the chamber, far away
  From the glad feast, sits love in dread
Lest guests disturb, in wanton play,
  The silence of the bridal bed.
His torch's pale flame serves to gild
  The scene with mystic sacred glow;
The room with incense-clouds is filled,
  That he may perfect rapture know.

How beats thy heart, when thou dost hear
The chimes that warn thy guests to fly?
How glow'st thou for those lips so dear,
That soon are mute, and nought deny!
With her into the holy place
Thou hast'nest then to perfect all;
The fire the warder's hands embrace,
Grows, like a night-light, dim and small.

How heaves the bosom, and how burns
Her face at every fervent kiss!
Her coldness now to trembling turns,
Thy daring now a duty is.
Love helps thee to undress her fast,
But thou art twice as fast as he;
And then he shuts both eyes at last
With sly and roguish modesty.

◆

MISCHIEVOUS JOY.

As a butterfly renewed,
When in life I breathed my last,
To the spots my flight I wing,
Scenes of heavenly rapture past,
Over meadows to the spring,
Round the hill, and through the wood.

Soon a tender pair I spy,
And I look down from my seat
On the beauteous maiden's head—
When embodied there I meet
All I lost as soon as dead,
Happy as before am I.

Him she clasps with silent smile,
And his mouth the hour improves,
Sent by kindly deities;
First from breast to mouth it roves,
Then from mouth to hands it flies,
And I round him sport the while.

And she sees me hov'ring near;
Trembling at her lover's rapture,
Up she springs — I fly away.
"Dearest! let's the insect capture!
Come! I long to make my prey
Yonder pretty little dear!"

◆

NOVEMBER SONG.

To the great archer — not to him
To meet whom flies the sun,
And who is wont his features dim
With clouds to overrun —

But to the boy be vowed these rhymes,
Who 'mongst the roses plays,
Who hears us, and at proper times
To pierce fair hearts essays.

Through him the gloomy winter night,
Of yore so cold and drear,
Brings many a loved friend to our sight,
And many a woman dear.

Henceforward shall his image fair
Stand in yon starry skies,
And, ever mild and gracious there,
Alternate set and rise.

◆

TO THE CHOSEN ONE.

[This sweet song is doubtless one of those addressed to Frederica.]

Hand in hand, and lip to lip!
Oh, be faithful, maiden dear!
Fare thee well! thy lover's ship
Past full many a rock must steer;
But should he the haven see,
When the storm has ceased to break,
And be happy, reft of thee, —
May the gods fierce vengeance take!

Boldly dared is well nigh won!
  Half my task is solved aright;
Every star's to me a sun,
  Only cowards deem it night.
Stood I idly by thy side,
  Sorrow still would sadden me;
But when seas our paths divide,
  Gladly toil I, — toil for thee!

Now the valley I perceive,
  Where together we will go,
And the streamlet watch each eve,
  Gliding peacefully below.
Oh, the poplars on yon spot!
  Oh, the beech trees in yon grove!
And behind we'll built a cot,
  Where to taste the joys of love!

◆

FIRST LOSS.

Ah! who'll ever those days restore,
  Those bright days of early love!
Who'll one hour again concede,
  Of that time so fondly cherished!
Silently my wounds I feed,
And with wailing evermore
  Sorrow o'er each joy now perished.
Ah! who'll e'er the days restore
  Of that time so fondly cherished!

◆

APPARENT DEATH.

Weep, maiden, weep here o'er the tomb of Love;
  He died of nothing — by mere chance was slain.
But is he really dead? — oh, *that* I cannot prove:
  A nothing, a mere chance, oft gives him life again.

AFTER-SENSATIONS.

When the vine again is blowing,
Then the wine moves in the cask;
When the rose again is glowing,
Wherefore should I feel oppressed?

Down my cheeks run tears all-burning,
If I do, or leave my task;
I but feel a speechless yearning,
That pervades my inmost breast.

But at length I see the reason,
When the question I would ask:
'Twas in such a beauteous season,
Doris glowed to make me blest!

◆

PRESENCE.

All things give token of thee!
As soon as the bright sun is shining,
Thou too wilt follow, I trust.

When in the garden thou walkest,
Thou then art the rose of all roses,
Lily of lilies as well.

When thou dost move in the dance,
Then each constellation moves also;
With thee and round thee they move.

Night! oh, what bliss were the night!
For then thou o'ershadow'st the lustre,
Dazzling and fair, of the moon.

Dazzling and beauteous art thou,
And flowers, and moon, and the planets
Homage pay, Sun, but to thee.

Sun! to *me* also be thou
Creator of days bright and glorious;
Life and Eternity this!

SEPARATION.

I THINK of thee whene'er the sun is glowing
Upon the lake;
Of thee, when in the crystal fountain flowing
The moonbeams shake.

I see thee when the wanton wind is busy,
And dust-clouds rise;
In the deep night, when o'er the bridge so dizzy
The wanderer hies.

I hear thee when the waves, with hollow roaring,
Gush forth their fill;
Often along the heath I go exploring,
When all is still.

I am with thee! Though far thou art and darkling,
Yet art thou near.
The sun goes down, the stars will soon be sparkling—
Oh, wert thou here.

TO THE DISTANT ONE.

AND have I lost thee evermore
Hast thou, oh, fair one, from me flown?
Still in mine ear sounds, as of yore,
Thine every word, thine every tone.

As when at morn the wanderer's eye
Attempts to pierce the air in vain,
When, hidden in the azure sky,
The lark high o'er him chants his strain.

So do I cast my troubled gaze
Through bush, through forest, o'er the lea,
Thou art invoked by all my lays;
Oh, come then, loved one, back to me!

BY THE RIVER.

Flow on, ye lays so loved, so fair,
On to Oblivion's ocean flow!
May no rapt boy recall you e'er,
No maiden in her beauty's glow!

My love alone was then your theme,
But now she scorns my passion true.
Ye were but written in the stream;
As it flows on, then, flow ye to!

THE EXCHANGE.

The stones in the streamlet I make my bright pillow,
And open my arms to the swift-rolling billow,
That lovingly hastens to fall on my breast.
Then fickleness soon bids it onwards be flowing;
A second draws nigh, its caresses bestowing,—
And so by a twofold enjoyment I'm blest.

And yet thou art trailing in sorrow and sadness
The moments that life, as it flies, gave for gladness,
Because by thy love thou'rt remembered no more!
Oh, call back to mind former days and their blisses!
The lips of the second will give as sweet kisses
As any the lips of the first gave before!

FAREWELL.

To break one's word is pleasure fraught,
To do one's duty gives a smart;
While man, alas! will promise nought,
That is repugnant to his heart.

Using some magic strain of yore,
Thou lurest him, when scarcely calm,
On to sweet folly's fragile bark once more,
Renewing, doubling chance of harm.

Why seek to hide thyself from me?
  Fly not my sight—be open then!
Known late or early it must be,
  And here thou hast thy word again.

My duty is fulfilled to-day,
  No longer will I guard thee from surprise;
But, oh, forgive the friend who from thee turns away
  And to himself for refuge flies!

WELCOME AND DEPARTURE.

[Another of the love-songs addressed to Frederica.]

To horse!—away, o'er hill and steep!
  Into the saddle blithe I sprung;
The eve was cradling earth to sleep,
  And night upon the mountain hung.
With robes of mist around him set,
  The oak like some huge giant stood,
While with its hundred eyes of jet,
  Peered darkness from the tangled wood.

Amidst a bank of clouds, the moon
  A sad and troubled glimmer shed;
The wind its chilly wings unclosed,
  And whistled wildly round my head.
Night framed a thousand phantoms dire
  Yet did I never droop nor start;
Within my veins what living fire!
  What quenchless glow within my heart!

We met; and from thy glance a tide
  Of stifling joy flowed into me:
My heart was wholly by thy side,
  My every breath was breathed for thee.
A blush was there, as if thy cheek
  The gentlest hues of spring had caught,
And smiles so kind for me!—Great powers!
  I hoped, yet I deserved them not!

But morning came to end my bliss;
  A long, a sad farewell we took;
What joy — what rapture in thy kiss,
  What depth of anguish in thy look!
I left thee, sweet! but after me,
  Thine eyes through tears looked from above;
Yet to be loved — what ecstasy!
  What ecstasy, ye gods, to love!

◆

NEW LOVE, NEW LIFE.

[Written at the time of Goethe's connection with Lili.]

Heart! my heart! what means this feeling?
  What oppresseth thee so sore?
What strange life is o'er me stealing!
  I acknowledge thee no more.
Fled is all that gave thee gladness,
Fled the cause of all thy sadness,
  Fled thy peace, thine industry —
  Ah, why suffer it to be?

Say, do beauty's graces youthful,
  Does this form so fair and bright,
Does this gaze, so kind, so truthful,
  Chain thee with unceasing might?
Would I tear me from her boldly,
Courage take, and fly her coldly,
  Back to her I'm forthwith led
  By the path I seek to tread.

By a thread I ne'er can sever,
  For 'tis 'twined with magic skill,
Doth the cruel maid forever
  Hold me fast against my will.
While those magic charms confine me,
To her will I must resign me.
  Ah, the change in truth is great!
  Love! kind love! release me straight!

TO BELINDA.

[This song was also written for Lili. Goethe mentions, at the end of his *Autobiography*, that he overheard her singing it one evening after he had taken his last farewell of her.]

WITH resistless power why dost thou press me
Into scenes so bright?
Had I not — good youth — so much to bless me
In the lonely night?

In my little chamber close I found me,
In the moon's cold beams;
And there quivering light fell softly round me,
While I lay in dreams.

And by hours of pure unmingled pleasure,
All my dreams were blest,
While I felt her image, as a treasure,
Deep within my breast.

Is it I, she at the table places,
'Mid so many lights?
Yes, to meet intolerable faces,
She her slave invites.

Ah! the Spring's fresh fields no longer cheer me,
Flowers no sweetness bring;
Angel, where thou art, all sweets are near me, —
Love, Nature, and Spring.

◆

WITH AN EMBROIDERED RIBBON.

LITTLE flowerets, little leaflets,
Have they woven with fairy hand,
Playful sunny elves of springtide,
Lightly called at my command.

Zephyr, bear it on thy pinions,
Drop it on my darling's dress,
So she'll pass before the mirror
In her doubled loveliness.

She, of roses still the fairest,
Roses shall around her see;
Give me but one look, my dearest,
And I ask no more of thee.

Feel but what this heart is feeling —
Frankly place thy hand in mine —
Trust me, love, the tie which binds us
Is no fragile rosy twine.

◆

SECOND LIFE.

After life's departing sigh,
To the spots I loved most dearly
In the sunshine and the shadow,
By the fountain welling clearly,
Through the wood and o'er the meadow,
Flit I like a butterfly.

There a gentle pair I spy.
Round the maiden's tresses flying,
From her chaplet I discover
All that I had lost in dying,
Still with her and with her lover,
Who so happy then as I?

For she smiles with laughing eyes;
And his lips to her he presses,
Vows of passion interchanging,
Stifling her with sweet caresses,
O'er her budding beauties ranging;
And around the twain I fly.

And she sees me fluttering nigh;
And beneath his ardor trembling,
Starts she up — then off I hover.
"Look there, dearest!" Thus dissembling,
Speaks the maiden to her lover —
"Come and catch that butterfly!"

TO MY MISTRESS.

All that's lovely speaks of thee!
When the glorious sun appeareth,
'Tis thy harbinger to me:
Only thus he cheereth.

In the garden where thou go'st,
There art thou the rose of roses,
First of lilies, fragrant most
Of the fragrant posies.

When thou movest in the dance,
All the stars with thee are moving
And around thee gleam and glance,
Never tired of loving.

Night!—and would the night were here!
Yet the moon would lose her duty;
Though her sheen be soft and clear,
Softer is thy beauty!

Fair, and kind, and gentle one!
Do not moon, and stars, and flowers
Pay that homage to their sun,
That we pay to ours?

Sun of mine, that art so dear—
Sun, that art above all sorrow!
Shine, I pray thee, on me here
Till the eternal morrow!

◆

FLOWER-SALUTE.

This nosegay,—'twas *I* dressed it,—
Greets thee a thousand times!
Oft stooped I, and caressed it,
Ah! full a thousand times,
And 'gainst my bosom pressed it
A hundred thousand times!

WITH A GOLDEN NECKLACE.

Accept, dear maid, this little token,
  A supple chain that fain would lie,
And keep its tiny links unbroken
  Upon a neck of ivory.

Pray, then, exalt it to this duty,
  And change its humbleness to pride
By day it will adorn your beauty,
  By night, 'tis quickly laid aside.

But if another hand should proffer
  A chain of weightier, closer kind,
Think twice ere you accept the offer;
  For there are chains will not unbind.

◆

MAY SONG.

How gloriously gleameth
  All nature to me!
How bright the sun beameth,
  How fresh is the lea!

White blossoms are bursting
  The thickets among
And all the gay greenwood
  Is ringing with song!

There's radiance and rapture
  That naught can destroy
O earth, in thy sunshine,
  O heart, in thy joy!

O love! thou enchanter,
  So golden and bright —
Like the red clouds of morning
  That rest on yon height; —

It is thou that art clothing
  The fields and the bowers,
And everywhere breathing
  The incense of flowers!

O maiden! dear maiden!
How well I love thee —
Thine eye, how it kindles
In answer to me!

Oh! well the lark loveth
Its song 'midst the blue;
Oh, gladly the flowerets
Expand to the dew.

And so do I love thee;
For all that is best,
I draw from thy beauty
To gladden my breast!

And all my heart's music
Is thrilling for thee!
Be evermore blest, love,
And loving to me!

◆

ON THE LAKE.

This little poem was composed during a tour in Switzerland in 1775. Several others in this series belong to the same period, being that when Goethe's passion for Anna Elizabeth Schonemaun, the Lili of his poems. was at its height.

And here I drink new blood, fresh food
From world so free, so blest;
How sweet is nature and how good
Who holds me to her breast!

The waves are cradling up our boat
The oars are beating time;
Mountains we meet that seem afloat
In heav'nly clouds sublime.

Why, my eye, art downward turning?
Golden dreams, are ye returning?
Dream, though gold, I thee repel;
Love and life here also dwell.

'Neath the wave are sinking
Stars from heaven sparkling;
Soft white mists are drinking
Distance towering, darkling,

Morning wind is fanning
Trees, by the bay that root,
And its image scanning
Is the ripening fruit.

◆

FROM THE MOUNTAIN.

[Written just after the preceding one, on a mountain overlooking the Lake of Zurich.]

Dearest Lili, if I did not love thee,
How transporting were a scene like this!
Yet, my Lili, if I did not love thee.
What were any bliss?

◆

MAY SONG.

Between wheatfield and corn,
Between hedgerow and thorn,
Between pasture and tree,
Where is my sweetheart?
Tell it me!

Sweetheart caught I
Not at home;
She's then, thought I,
Gone to roam.
Fair and loving
Blooms sweet May
Sweetheart's roving,
Free and gay.

By the rock near the wave,
Where her first kiss she gave,
On the greensward, to me.—
Something I see!
Is it she?

◆

With a master all smoothly goes
Who what he bids, himself well knows.

EARLY SPRING.

Come ye so early,
  Days of delight?
Making the hillside
  Blithesome and bright?

Merrily, merrily,
  Little brooks rush,
Down by the meadow,
  Under the bush.

Welkin and hilltop,
  Azure and cool;
Fishes are sporting
  In streamlet and pool.

Birds of gay feather
  Flit through the grove,
Singing together
  Ditties of love.

Busily coming
  From moss-covered bowers,
Brown bees are humming,
  Questing for flowers.

Lightsome emotion,
  Life everywhere;
Faint wafts of fragrance
  Scenting the air.

Now comes there sounding
  A sough of the breeze,
Shakes through the thicket,
  Sinks in the trees.

Sinks, but returning,
  It ruffles my hair;
Aid me this rapture,
  Muses, to bear!

Know ye the passion
  That stirs in me here?
Yester e'en at gloaming
  Was I with my dear!

IN SUMMER.

How plain and height
With dewdrops are bright!
How pearls have crowned
The plants all around!
How sighs the breeze
Through thicket and trees
How loudly in the sun's clear rays
The sweet birds carol forth their lays!

But, ah! above,
When saw I my love,
Within her room,
Small, mantled in gloom,
Enclosed around,
Where sunlight was drowned,
How little then was earth to me,
With all its beauteous majesty!

◆

AUTUMN FEELINGS.

Flourish greener, as ye clamber,
O ye leaves, to seek my chamber,
  Up the trellised vine on high!
May ye swell, twin-berries tender,
Juicier far, — and with more splendor
  Ripen, and more speedily!
O'er ye broods the sun at even
As he sinks to rest, and heaven
  Softly breathes into your ear
All its fertilizing fulness,
While the moon's refreshing coolness,
  Magic-laden, hovers near;
And, alas! ye're watered ever
  By a stream of tears that rill
From mine eyes, — tears ceasing never,
  Tears of love that naught can still!

RESTLESS LOVE.

Through rain, through snow,
Through tempest go!
'Mongst steaming caves,
O'er misty waves,
On, on! still on!
Peace, rest have flown!

Sooner through sadness
  I'd wish to be slain,
Than all the gladness
  Of life to sustain;
All the fond yearning
  That heart feels for heart,
Only seems burning
  To make them both smart.

How shall I fly?
Forestwards hie?
Vain were all strife!
Bright crown of life,
Turbulent bliss,—
Love, thou art this!

THE SHEPHERD'S LAMENT.

Up yonder on the mountain,
  I dwelt for days together;
Looked down into the valley,
  This pleasant summer weather.

My sheep go feeding onward,
  My dog sits watching by;
I've wandered to the valley,
  And yet I know not why.

The meadow, it is pretty,
  With flowers so fair to see;
I gather them, but no one
  Will take the flowers from me.

The good tree gives me shadow,
  And shelter from the rain;
But yonder door is silent,
  It will not ope again!

I see the rainbow bending,
  Above her old abode,
But she is there no longer;
  They've taken my love abroad.

They took her o'er the mountains,
  They took her o'er the sea;
Move on, move on, my bonny sheep,
  There is no rest for me!

◆

NIGHT SONG.

When on thy pillow lying,
  Half listen, I implore,
And at my lute's soft sighing,
  Sleep on! what wouldst thou more?

For at my lute's soft sighing
  The stars their blessings pour
On feelings never-dying;
  Sleep on! what wouldst thou more?

Those feelings never-dying
  My spirit aid to soar
From earthly conflicts trying;
  Sleep on! what wouldst thou more?

From earthly conflicts trying
  Thou driv'st me to this shore;
Through thee I'm hither flying,—
  Sleep on! what wouldst thou more?

Through thee I'm hither flying,
  Thou wilt not list before
In slumbers thou art lying:
  Sleep on! what wouldst thou more?

COMFORT IN TEARS.

How is it that thou art so sad
When others are so gay?
Thou hast been weeping — nay, thou hast!
Thine eyes the truth betray.

" And if I may not choose but weep,
Is not my grief mine own?
No heart was heavier yet for tears —
O leave me, friend, alone ! "

Come join this once the merry band,
They call aloud for thee,
And mourn no more for what is lost,
But let the past go free.

" O, little know ye in your mirth,
What wrings my heart so deep!
I have not lost the idol yet,
For which I sigh and weep."

Then rouse thee and take heart! thy blood
Is young and full of fire;
Youth should have hope and might to win,
And wear its best desire.

" O, never may I hope to gain
What dwells from me so far;
It stands as high, it looks as bright,
As yonder burning star."

Why, who would seek to woo the stars
Down from their glorious sphere?
Enough it is to worship them,
When nights are calm and clear.

" Oh, I look up and worship too —
My star it shines by day —
Then let me weep the livelong night
The whilst it is away."

LONGING.

What stirs in my heart so ?
  What lures me from home ?
What forces me outwards,
  And onwards to roam ?
Far up on the mountains
  Lie cloudlets like snow ;
O were I but yonder,
  'Tis there I must go !

Now by come the ravens
  So solemn and black ;
I mingle among them,
  And follow their track :
By rock and by turret
  We silently glide ;
Ah, there is the bower, where
  My lady doth bide !

She walks in the greenwood,
  That beautiful may ;
Like a bird singing clearly,
  I drop on the spray.
She lists, and she lingers,
  And softly says she —
"How sweetly it singeth,
  It singeth for me !"

The sunset is gilding
  The peaks of the hill,
The day is declining,
  Yet tarries she still :
She follows the brooklet
  Through meadow and glade,
Till dark is the pathway,
  And lost in the shade.

Then, then I come down, as
  A swift-shooting star ;
"What light glitters yonder,
  So near yet so far ?"

Ere yet the amazement
Hath passed from thee, sweet,
My quest it is ended,
I lie at thy feet!

◆

THE CASTLE ON THE MOUNTAIN.

There stands an ancient castle
On yonder mountain height,
Where, fenced with door and portal,
Once tarried steed and knight.

But gone are door and portal,
And all is hushed and still;
O'er ruined wall and rafter
I clamber as I will.

A cellar with many a vintage
Once lay in yonder nook;
Where now are the cellarer's flagons
And where is his jovial look?

No more he sets the beakers
For the guests at the wassail feast;
Nor fills a flask from the oldest cask
For the duties of the priest.

No more he gives on the staircase
The stoup to the thirsty squires,
And a hurried thanks for the hurried gift
Receives, nor more requires.

For burned are roof and rafter,
And they hang begrimed and black;
And stair, and hall, and chapel,
Are turned to dust and wrack.

Yet, as with song and cittern,
One day when the sun was bright
I saw my love ascending
The slopes of yon rocky height;

From the hush and desolation
  Sweet fancies did unfold,
And it seemed as they had come back again,
  The jovial days of old.

As if the stateliest chambers
  For noble guests were spread,
And out from the prime of that glorious time
  A youth a maiden led.

And, standing in the chapel,
  The good old priest did say,
"Will ye wed with one another?"
  And we smiled and answered "Yea!"

We sung, and our hearts they bounded
  To the thrilling lays we sung,
And every note was doubled
  By the echo's catching tongue.

And when, as eve descended,
  The hush grew deep and still,
And the setting sun looked upward
  On that great castled hill;

Then far and wide, like lord and bride,
  In the radiant light we shone—
It sank; and again the ruins
  Stood desolate and lone!

◆

TO MIGNON.

Over vale and torrent far
Rolls along the sun's bright car.
Ah! he wakens in his course
  Mine, as thy deep-seated smart
  In the heart,
Ev'ry morning with new force.

Scarce avails night aught to me;
E'en the visions that I see

Come but in a mournful guise;
  And I feel this silent smart
  In my heart
With creative power arise.

During many a beauteous year
I have seen ships 'neath me steer,
As they seek the shelt'ring bay;
  But, alas, each lasting smart
  In my heart
Floats not with the stream away.

I must wear a gala dress,
Long stored up within my press,
For to-day to feasts is given;
  None know with what bitter smart
  Is my heart
Fearfully and madly riven.

Secretly I weep each tear,
Yet can cheerful e'en appear,
With a face of healthy red;
  For if deadly were this smart
  In my heart,
Ah, I then had long been dead!

◆

SPIRIT GREETING.

Upon a tower antique and high
  Stood ghost of hero brave,
Who, as the ship went sailing by,
  This "God-speed" to her gave.

"See! these my sinews stark were once,
  This heart beat fast and wild,
Of knightly marrow full these bones,
  Brimful this goblet filled.

"Half of my life in storm was passed,
  Half wasted was in ease,
Speed, human cargo, far and fast,
  On, on, before the breeze!"

TO A GOLDEN HEART HE WAS WEARING ON HIS NECK.

[Addressed, during the Swiss tour already mentioned, to a present Lili had given him, during the time of their happy connection, which was then about to be terminated forever.]

Thou, of joy that died away, the token
Which as yet I on my neck am wearing,
Longer hold'st us twain, thou mental tie that's broken?
Art thou the length of love's short days repairing?

Flee I, Lili, from thee! Must still, tied to thy fetter,
Like unto a debtor,
Roam in strange lands, through vales and forests darting!
Ah! not so soon could this my heart from
My Lili's heart be parting.

Like a bird that erst did break his string,
And to the wood returns,
He drags of his prison the disgrace,
Still some bit of the string on his trace;
No longer the old bird, once born with freedom's wing;
Has been a slave where'er he turns.

◆

WANDERER'S NIGHT-SONG.

Thou that from the heavens art,
Every pain and sorrow stillest,
And the doubly wretched heart
Doubly with refreshment fillest,
I am weary with contending!
Why this rapture and unrest?
Peace descending
Come, ah, come into my breast!

O'er all the hill-tops
Is quiet now,
In all the tree-tops
Hearest thou
Hardly a breath;
The birds are asleep in the trees:
Wait; soon like these
Thou, too, shalt rest.

ILM, THE RIVER, TO THE MOON.

Fillest hill and vale again,
  Still with softening light!
Loosest from the world's cold chain
  All my soul to-night!

Spreadest round me far and nigh,
  Soothingly, thy smile;
From thee, as from friendship's eye,
  Sorrow shrinks the while.

Every echo thrills my heart,—
  Glad and gloomy mood,
Joy and sorrow both have part
  In my solitude.

River, river, glide along!
  I am sad, alas!
Fleeting things are love and song,—
  Even so they pass.

I have had and I have lost
  What I long for yet;
Ah! why will we, to our cost,
  Simple joys forget?

River, river, glide along,
  Without stop or stay!
Murmur, whisper to my song
  In melodious play.

Whether on a winter's night
  Rise thy swelling floods,
Or in spring thou hast delight
  Watering the young buds.

Happy he who, hating none,
  Leaves the world's dull noise,
And, with trusty friends alone,
  Quietly enjoys

What, forever unexpressed,
  Hid from common sight,
Through the mazes of the breast
  Softly steals by night!

HUNTSMAN'S EVENING SONG.

In silence sad, from heath to hill
With rifle slung I glide,
But thy dear shape, it haunts me still,
It hovers by my side.

Across the brook, and past the mill,
I watch thee gayly fleet;
Ah, does one shape, that ne'er is still,
E'er cross thy fancy, sweet?

'Tis his, who, tortured by unrest,
Roams ever to and fro,
Now ranging east, now ranging west,
Since forced from thee to go.

And yet at times the thought of thee,
Like moonlight in a dream,
Doth bring, I know not how, to me
Content and peace supreme.

EVENING.

[Written at night on the *Kickelhahn*, a hill in the forest of Ilmenau, on the walls of a little hermitage where Goethe composed the last act of his *Iphigenia.*]

Peace breathes along the shade
Of every hill,
The tree-tops of the glade
Are hushed and still;
All woodland murmurs cease,
The birds to rest within the brake are gone.
Be patient, weary heart — anon,
Thou, too, shalt be at peace!

TO LINA.

Lina, rival of the linnet,
When these lays shall reach thy hand,
Please transfer them to the spinnet,
Where thy friend was wont to stand.

Set the diapason ringing,
 Ponder not the words you see,
Give them utterance by thy singing
 Then each leaf belongs to thee.

With the life of music fill them;
 Cold the written verses seem,
That, would Lina deign to trill them,
 Might be trancing as a dream.

◆

EVER AND EVERYWHERE.

Far explore the mountain hollow,
High in air the clouds then follow!
 To each brook and vale the Muse
 Thousand times her call renews.

Soon as flow'ret blooms in spring,
 It wakens many a strain;
And when Time spreads his fleeting wing,
 The seasons come again.

◆

DELIGHT OF SORROW.

Dry not up, dry not up,
 Tears shed by love everlasting!
Ah! to the eye that half only dried is,
How dreary, how dead the world does appear!
Dry not up, dry not up,
 Tears my love unhappy is shedding!

◆

PROXIMITY.

I know not, wherefore, dearest love,
 Thou often art so strange and coy!
When 'mongst man's busy haunts we move,
 Thy coldness puts to flight my joy.
But soon as night and silence round us reign,
I know thee by thy kisses sweet again!

A NIGHT THOUGHT.

I do not envy you, ye joyless stars,
Though fair ye be, and glorious to the sight —
The seaman's hope amidst the 'whelming storm,
When help from God or man there cometh none.
No! for ye love not, nor have ever loved!
Through the broad fields of heaven, the eternal hours
Lead on your circling spheres unceasingly.
How vast a journey have ye travelled o'er,
Since I, upon the bosom of my love,
Forgot all memory of night or you!

◆

PETITION.

Oh, thou sweet maiden fair,
Thou with the raven hair,
  Why to the window go?
  While gazing down below,
Art standing vainly there?
Oh, if thou stood'st for me,
  And lett'st the latch but fly
How happy should I be!
  How soon would I leap high!

◆

TO HIS COY ONE.

Seest thou yon smiling orange?
Upon the tree still hangs it;
Already March hath vanished,
And new-born flowers are shooting.
I draw nigh to the tree then,
And there I say: O orange,
Thou ripe and juicy orange,
Thou sweet and luscious orange,
I shake the tree, I shake it,
Oh, fall into my lap.

ROLLICKING HANS.

Hallo there! A glass!
Ha! the draught's truly sweet!
If for drink go my shoes,
I shall still have my feet.

A maiden and wine,
With sweet music and song,—
I would they were mine,
All life's journey along!

If I depart from this sad sphere,
And leave a will behind me here,
A suit at law will be preferred,
But as for thanks,—the deuce a word!
So ere I die, I squander all,
And that's a proper will I call.

HIS COMRADE.

Hallo there: A glass!
Ha! the draught's truly sweet!
If thou keepest thy shoes,
Thou wilt then spare thy feet.

A maiden and wine,
With sweet music and song,
On payment, are thine,
All life's journey along!

◆

TO LIDA.

The only one whom, Lida, thou canst love,
Thou claim'st, and rightly claim'st, for only thee;
He, too, is wholly thine; since doomed to rove
Far from thee, in life's turmoils naught I see
Save a thin veil, through which thy form I view,
As though in clouds; with kindly smile and true,
It cheers me, like the stars eterne that gleam
Across the northern lights' far-flick'ring beam.

RECIPROCAL.

My mistress, where sits she?
What is it that charms?
The absent she's rocking,
Held fast in her arms.

In pretty cage prisoned
She holds a bird still;
Yet lets him fly from her,
Whenever he will.

He pecks at her finger,
And pecks at her lips,
And hovers and flutters,
And round her he skips.

Then hasten thou homeward,
In fashion to be;
If thou hast the maiden,
She also hath thee.

◆

THE FREEBOOTER.

No door has my house,
No house has my door;
And in and out ever
I carry my store.

No grate has my kitchen,
No kitchen my grate;
Yet roasts it and boils it
Both early and late.

My bed has no trestles,
My trestles no bed;
Yet merrier moments
No mortal e'er led.

My cellar is lofty,
My barn is full deep,
From top to the bottom, —
There lie I and sleep.

And soon as I waken,
All moves on its race;
My place has no fixture,
My fixture no place.

◆

JOY AND SORROW.

As fisher-boy I fared
To the black rock in the sea,
And, while false gifts I prepared,
Listened and sang merrily,
Down descended the decoy,
Soon a fish attacked the bait;
One exulting shout of joy, —
And the fish was captured straight.

Ah! on shore, and to the wood,
Past the cliffs, o'er stock and stone,
One foot's traces I pursued,
And the maiden was alone.
Lips were silent, eyes downcast
As a clasp-knife snaps the bait,
With her snare she seized me fast,
And the boy was captured straight.

Heaven knows who's the happy swain
That she rambles with anew!
I must dare the sea again,
Spite of wind and weather, too.
When the great and little fish
Wail and flounder in my net,
Straight returns my eager wish
In her arms to revel yet!

◆

MARCH.

The snow-flakes fall in showers,
The time is absent still,
When all Spring's beauteous flowers,
When all Spring's beauteous flowers
Our hearts with joy shall fill.

With lustre false and fleeting
  The sun's bright rays are thrown;
The swallow's self is cheating,
The swallow's self is cheating;
  And why? He comes alone!

Can I e'er feel delighted
  Alone, though Spring is near?
Yet when we are united,
Yet when we are united,
  The summer will be here

◆

APRIL.

Tell me, eyes, what 'tis ye're seeking;
  For ye're saying something sweet,
  Fit the ravished ear to greet,
Eloquently, softly speaking

Yet I see now why ye're roving;
  For behind those eyes so bright,
  To itself abandoned quite,
Lies a bosom, truthful, loving,—

One that it must fill with pleasure
  'Mongst so many, dull and blind,
  One true look at length to find,
That its worth can rightly treasure.

Whilst I'm lost in studying ever
  To explain these ciphers duly,—
  To unravel *my* books truly
In return be your endeavor!

◆

MAY.

Light and silv'ry cloudlets hover
  In the air, as yet scarce warm;
Mild, with glimmer soft tinged over,
  Peeps the sun through fragrant balm.

Gently rolls and heaves the ocean
  As its waves the bank o'erflow,
And with ever restless motion
  Moves the verdure to and fro,
  Mirrored brightly far below.

What is now the foliage moving?
  Air is still, and hush'd the breeze,
Sultriness, this fulness loving,
  Through the thicket, from the trees.
Now the eye at once gleams brightly,
  See! the infant band with mirth
Moves and dances nimbly, lightly,
  As the morning gave it birth,
  Flutt'ring two and two o'er earth.

. . . .

JUNE.

She behind yon mountain lives,
Who my love's sweet guerdon gives.
Tell me, mount, how this can be,
Very glass thou seem'st to me!
And I seem to be close by,
For I see her drawing nigh;
Now, because I'm absent, sad,
Now, because she sees me, glad.

Soon between us rise to sight
Valleys cool, with bushes light,
Streams and meadows; next appear
  Mills and wheels, the surest token
That a level spot is near,
  Plains far-stretching and unbroken.
And so onwards, onwards roam,
To my garden and my home!

But how comes it then to pass?
All this gives no joy, alas! —
I was ravished by her sight,
By her eyes so fair and bright,
By her footstep soft and light.

How her peerless charms I praised,
When from head to foot I gazed!
I am here, she's far away, —
I am gone, with her to stay.

If on rugged hills she wander,
  If she haste the vale along,
Pinions seem to flutter yonder,
  And the air is filled with song;
With the glow of youth still playing
  Joyous vigor in each limb,
One in silence is delaying,
  She alone 'tis blesses him.

Love, thou art too fair, I ween!
Fairer I have never seen!
From the heart full easily
Blooming flowers are culled by the
If I think: "Oh, were it so,"
Bone and marrow seem to glow!
If rewarded by her love,
Can I greater rapture prove?

And still fairer is the bride,
When in me she will confide,
When she speaks and lets me know
All her tale of joy and woe.
All her lifetime's history
Now is fully known to me.
Who in child or woman e'er
Soul and body found so fair?

◆

SICILIAN SONG.

Ye black and roguish eyes,
  If ye command,
Each house in ruin lies,
  No town can stand.
And shall my bosom's chain,—
  This plaster wall, —
To think one moment, deign,—
  Shall *it* not fall?

NEXT YEAR'S SPRING.

The bed of flowers
Loosens amain,
The beauteous snowdrops
Drop o'er the plain.
The crocus opens
Its glowing bud,
Like emeralds others,
Others, like blood.
With saucy gesture
Primroses flare,
And roguish violets
Hidden with care;
And whatsoever
There stirs and strives,
The Spring's contented,
It works and thrives.
'Mongst all the blossoms
That fairest are,
My sweetheart's sweetness
Is sweetest far;
Upon me ever
Her glances light,
My song they waken
My words make bright.
An ever open
And blooming mind,
In sport, unsullied,
In earnest, kind.
Though roses and lilies
By summer are brought,
Against my sweetheart
Prevails he naught.

SWISS SONG.

Up in the mountain
I was a-sitting,
With the bird there
As my guest,
Blithely singing,
Blithely springing,
And building
His nest.

In the garden
I was a-standing,
And the bee there
Saw as well,
Buzzing, humming,
Going, coming,
And building
His cell.

O'er the meadow
I was a-going,
And there saw the
Butterflies,
Sipping, dancing,
Flying, glancing,
And charming
The eyes.

And then came my
Dear Hansel,
And I showed them
With glee,
Sipping, quaffing,
And he, laughing,
Sweet kisses
Gave me.

AT MIDNIGHT HOUR.

[Goethe relates that a remarkable situation he was in one bright moonlight night led to the composition of this sweet song, which was "the dearer to him because he could not say whence it came and whither it would."]

AT midnight hour I went, not willingly,
  A little, little boy yon churchyard past,
To Father Vicar's house; the stars on high
  On all around, their beauteous radiance cast,
      At midnight hour.

And when, in journeying o'er the path of life,
  My love I followed, as she onward moved,
With stars and northern lights o'erhead in strife,
  Going and coming, perfect bliss I proved
      At midnight hour.

Until at length the full moon, lustre-fraught,
  Burst thro' the gloom wherein she was enshrined;
And then the willing, active, rapid thought
  Around the past, as round the future twined,
      At midnight hour.

◆

TO THE RISING FULL MOON.

Dornburg, 25th August, 1828.

WILT thou suddenly enshroud thee,
  Who this moment wert so nigh?
Heavy rising masses cloud thee,
  Thou art hidden from mine eye.

Yet my sadness thou well knowest,
  Gleaning sweetly as a star!
That I'm loved, 'tis *thou* that showest,
  Though my loved one may be far.

Upward mount then! clearer, milder,
  Robed in splendor far more bright!
Though my heart with grief throbs wilder,
  Fraught with rapture is the night!

THE BRIDEGROOM.*

I SLEPT, —'twas midnight, — in my bosom woke,
As though 'twere day, my love-o'erflowing heart;
To me it seemed like night, when day first broke;
What is't to me, whate'er it may impart?

She was away; the world's unceasing strife
For her alone I suffered through the heat
Of sultry day; oh, what refreshing life
At cooling eve! — my guerdon was complete.

The sun now set, and wand'ring hand in hand,
His last and blissful look we greeted then;
While spake our eyes, as they each other scanned:
"From the far east, let's trust, he'll come again!"

At midnight! — the bright stars, in vision blest,
Guide to the threshold where she slumbers calm;
Oh, be it mine, there too at length to rest,—
Yet howsoe'er this prove, life's full of charm!

◆

SUCH, SUCH IS HE WHO PLEASETH ME.

FLY, dearest, fly! He is not nigh!
He who found thee one fair morn in Spring
In the wood where thou thy flight didst wing.
Fly, dearest, fly! He is not nigh!
Never rests the foot of evil spy.

Hark! flutes' sweet strains and love's refrains
Reach the loved one, borne there by the wind,
In the soft heart open doors they find.
Hark! flutes' sweet strains and love's refrains,
Hark! — yet blissful love their echo pains.

Erect his head, and firm his tread,
Raven hair around his smooth brow strays,
On his cheeks a spring eternal plays.
Erect his head, and firm his tread,
And by grace his ev'ry step is led.

---

* Not in the English sense of the word, but the German, where it has the meaning of *betrothed*.

Happy his breast, with pureness blessed,
And the dark eyes 'neath his eyebrows placed,
With full many a beauteous line are graced.
Happy his breast, with pureness blessed,
Soon as seen, thy love must be confessed.

His mouth is red — its power I dread,
On his lips morn's fragrant incense lies,
Round his lips the cooling zephyr sighs.
His mouth is red — its power I dread,
With one glance from him, all sorrow's fled.

His blood is true, his heart bold too,
In his soft arms, strength, protection, dwells,
And his face with noble pity swells.
His blood is true, his heart bold too,
Blest the one whom those dear arms may woo!

◆

GYPSY SONG.

In the drizzling mist, with the snow high-piled,
In the winter night, in the forest wild,
I heard the wolves with their ravenous howl,
I heard the screaming note of the owl:
Wille wau wau wau!
Wille wo wo wo!
Wito hu!

I shot, one day, a cat in the ditch —
The dear black cat of Anna the witch;
Upon me, at night, seven were-wolves came down,
Seven women they were, from out of the town.
Wille wau wau wau!
Wille wo! wo! wo!
Wito hu!

I knew them all; ay, I knew them straight;
First, Anna, then Ursula, Eve, and Kate,
And Barbara, Lizzy, and Bet as well:
And forming a ring, they began to yell:
Wille wau wau, wau!
Wille wo wo wo!
Wito hu!

Then called I their names with angry threat:
"What wouldst thou, Anna? What wouldst thou,
Bet?"
At hearing my voice, themselves they shook,
And howling and yelling, to flight they took.
Wille wau wau wau!
Wille wo wo wo!
Wito hu!

◆

THE DESTRUCTION OF MAGDEBURG.

[For a fine account of the fearful sack of Magdeburg, by Tilly, in the year 1631, see SCHILLER'S *History of the Thirty Years' War.*]

OH, Magdeburg the town!
Fair maids thy beauty crown,
Thy charms fair maids and matrons crown;
Oh, Magdeburg the town!

Where all so blooming stands,
Advance fierce Tilly's bands;
O'er gardens and o'er well-tilled lands
Advance fierce Tilly's bands.

Now Tilly's at the gate.
Our homes who'll liberate?
Go, loved one, hasten to the gate,
And dare the combat straight!

There is no need as yet,
However fierce his threat;
Thy rosy cheeks I'll kiss, sweet pet!
There is no need as yet.

My longing makes me pale.
Oh, what can wealth avail?
E'en now thy father may be pale.
Thou makest my courage fail.

Oh, mother, give me bread!
Is then my father dead?
Oh, mother, one small crust of bread!
Oh! what misfortune dread!

Thy father, dead lies he,
The trembling townsmen flee,
Adown the street the blood runs free;
Oh, whither shall we flee?

The churches ruined lie,
The houses burn on high,
The roofs they smoke, the flames out fly,
Into the street then hie!

No safety there they meet!
The soldiers fill the street,
With fire and sword the wreck complete:
No safety there they meet!

Down falls the houses' line,
Where now is thine or mine?
That bundle yonder is not thine,
Thou flying maiden mine!

The women sorrow sore,
The maidens far, far more.
The living are no virgins more.
Thus Tilly's troops make war?

◆

FINNISH SONG.

If the loved one, the well-known one,
Should return as he departed,
On his lips would ring my kisses,
Though the wolf's blood might have dyed them;
And a hearty grasp I'd give him,
Though his finger-ends were serpents.

Wind! Oh, if thou hadst but reason,
Word for word in turns thou'dst carry,
E'en though some perchance might perish
'Tween two lovers so far distant.

All choice morsels I'd dispense with,
Table-flesh of priests neglect, too,
Sooner than renounce my lover,
Whom, in summer having vanquished,
I in winter tamed still longer.

DEPRESSION.

Roses, ah, how fair ye be!
Ye are fading, dying!
Ye should with my lady be,
On her bosom lying;
All your bloom is lost on me,
Here despairing, sighing.

Oh, the golden dreams I nursed,
Ere I knew thy scorning,
When I poured my passion first,
And at break of morning,
Plucked the rosebuds ere they burst
For thy breast's adorning!

Every fruit and floweret rare,
To thy feet I bore it,
Fondly knelt, to see thee there
Bending fondly o'er it,
Gazing on thy face so fair,
To revere, adore it.

Roses, ah! how fair ye be!
Ye are fading, dying!
Ye should with my lady be,
On her bosom lying;
All your bloom is lost on me,
Here despairing, sighing.

◆

SORROW WITHOUT CONSOLATION.

O, wherefore shouldst thou try
The tears of love to dry?
Nay, let them flow!
For didst thou only know,
How barren and how dead
Seems everything below,
To those who have not tears enough to shed,
Thou'dst rather bid them weep, and seek their comfort so.

THE PARTING.

Let mine eyes the farewell make thee
Which my lips refuse to speak;
Scorn me not, if, to forsake thee,
Makes my very manhood weak.

Joyless in our joy's eclipse, love,
Are love's tokens, else divine,
Cold the kisses of thy lips, love,
Damp the hand that's locked in mine.

Once thy lip, to touch it only,
To my soul has sent a thrill,
Sweeter than the violet lonely,
Plucked in March-time by the rill.

Garlands never more I'll fashion,
Roses twine no more for thee;
Spring is here, but, ah, my passion,
Autumn dark has come for me!

◆

ON THE NEW YEAR.

[Composed for a merry party that used to meet, in 1802, at Goethe's house.]

Fate now allows us,
'Twixt the departing
And the upstarting,
Happy to be;
And at the call of
Memory cherished,
Future and perished
Moments we see.

Seasons of anguish, —
Ah, they must ever
Truth from woe sever,
Love and joy part;
Days still more worthy
Soon will unite us,
Fairer songs light us,
Strength'ning the heart.

We, thus united,
  Think of, with gladness,
  Rapture and sadness,
Sorrow now flies.
O, how mysterious
  Fortune's direction!
  Old the connection,
New-born the prize!

Thank, for this, Fortune,
  Wavering blindly!
  Thank all that kindly
Fate may bestow!
Revel in change's
  Impulses clearer,
  Love far sincerer,
More heartfelt glow.

Over the old one,
  Wrinkles collected,
  Sad and dejected,
Others may view;
But, on *us* gently
  Shineth a true one,
  And to the new one
We, too, are new.

As a fond couple
  'Midst the dance veering,
  First disappearing,
Then reappear,
So let affliction
  Guide thro' life's mazy
  Pathways so hazy
Into the year.

◆

ANNIVERSARY SONG.

[This little song describes the different members of the party just spoken of.]

Why pacest thou, my neighbor fair,
  The garden all alone?
If house and land thou seek'st to guard,
  I'd thee as mistress own.

My brother sought the cellar-maid,
  And suffered her no rest;
She gave him a refreshing draught,
  A kiss, too, she impressed.

My cousin is a prudent wight,
  The cook's by him adored;
He turns the spit round ceaselessly,
  To gain love's sweet reward.

We six together then began
  A banquet to consume,
When lo! a fourth pair singing came,
  And danced into the room.

Welcome were they, — and welcome, too,
  Was a fifth jovial pair,
Brimful of news, and stored with tales
  And jests both new and rare.

For riddles, spirit, raillery,
  And wit, a place remained;
A sixth pair then our circle joined,
  And so that prize was gained.

And yet, to make us truly blest,
  One missed we, and full sore;
A true and tender couple came, —
  We needed then no more.

The social banquet now goes on.
  Unchequered by alloy;
The sacred double-numbers then
  Let all at once enjoy!

◆

THE SPRING ORACLE.

Oh, prophetic bird so bright,
Blossom-songster, cuckoo hight!
In the fairest time of year,
Dearest bird, oh! deign to hear

What a youthful pair would pray;
Do thou call, if hope they may;
Thy cuck-oo, thy cuck-oo,
Ever more cuck-oo, cuck-oo!

Hearest thou? A loving pair
Fain would to the altar fare;
Yes! a pair in happy youth,
Full of virtue, full of truth.
Is the hour not fixed by fate?
Say, how long must they still wait?
Hark! cuck-oo! hark! cuck-oo!
Silent yet! for shame, cuck-oo!

'Tis not our fault, certainly!
Only two years patient be!
But if we ourselves please here,
Will pa-pa-papas appear?
Know that thou'lt more kindness do us,
More thou'lt prophesy unto us.
One! cuck-oo! Two! cuck-oo!
Ever, ever, cuck-oo, cuck-oo, coo!

If we've calculated clearly,
We have half a dozen nearly.
If good promises we'll give,
Wilt thou say how long we'll live?
Truly, we'll confess to thee,
We'd prolong it willingly.
Coo, cuck-oo, coo, cuck-oo!
Coo, coo, coo, coo, coo, coo, coo, coo, coo!

Life is one continued feast —
(If we keep no score, at least).
If now we together dwell,
Will true love remain as well?
For if *that* should e'er decay,
Happiness would pass away.
Coo cuck-oo, coo cuck-oo,
Coo, coo, coo, coo, coo, coo, coo, coo, coo!

(Gracefully *in infinitum.*)

THE HAPPY COUPLE.

After these vernal rains
That we so warmly sought,
Dear wife, see how our plains
With blessings sweet are fraught!
We cast our distant gaze
Far in the misty blue;
Here gentle love still strays,
Here dwells still rapture true.

Thou see'st whither go
Yon pair of pigeons white,
Where swelling violets blow
Round sunny foliage bright.
'Twas there we gathered first
A nosegay as we roved;
There into flame first burst
The passion that we proved.

Yet when, with plighted troth,
The priest beheld us fare,
Home from the altar both,
With many a youthful pair,—
Then other moons had birth,
And many a beauteous sun,
Then we had gained the earth
Whereon life's race to run.

A hundred thousand fold
The mighty bond was sealed;
In woods, on mountains cold,
In bushes, in the field,
Within the wall, in caves,
And on the craggy height,
And love, e'en o'er the waves,
Bore in his tube the light.

Contented we remained,
We deemed ourselves a pair;
'Twas otherwise ordained,
For, lo! a third was there;

A fourth, fifth, sixth appeared,
And sat around our board;
And now the plants we've reared
High o'er our heads have soared!

How fair and pleasant looks,
On yonder beauteous spot,
Embraced by poplar-brooks,
The newly finished cot!
Who is it there that sits
In that glad home above?
Is't not our darling Fritz
With his own darling love?

Beside yon precipice,
Whence pent-up waters steal,
And, leaving the abyss,
Fall foaming through the wheel, —
Though people often tell
Of millers' wives so fair,
Yet none can e'er excel
Our dearest daughter there!

Yet where the thick-set green
Stands round yon church and sod,
Where the old fir-tree's seen
Alone tow'rd heaven to nod, —
'Tis there the ashes lie
Of our untimely dead;
From earth our gaze on high
By their blest memory's led.

See how yon hill is bright
With billowy-waving arms!
The force returns, whose might
Has vanquished war's alarms.
Who proudly hastens here
With wreath-encircled brow?
'Tis like our child so dear! —
Thus Charles comes homeward now.

That dearest honored guest
Is welcomed by the bride;
She makes the true one blest,
At the glad festal tide.

And every one makes haste
To join the dance with glee;
While thou with wreaths hast graced
The youngest children three.

To sound of flute and horn
The time appears renewed,
When we, in love's young morn,
In the glad dance upstood;
And perfect bliss I know
Ere the year's course is run,
For to the font we go
With grandson and with son!

◆

SONG OF FELLOWSHIP.

[Written and sung in honor of the birthday of the Pastor Ewald, at the time of Goethe's happy connection with Lili.]

In every hour of joy
That love and wine prolong,
The moments we'll employ
To carol forth this song!
We're gathered in His name,
Whose power hath brought us here
He kindled first our flame,
He bids it burn more clear.

Then gladly glow to-night,
And let our hearts combine!
Up! quaff with fresh delight
This glass of sparkling wine!
Up! hail the joyous hour,
And let your kiss be true;
With each new bond of power
The old becomes the new!

Who in our circle lives,
And is not happy there?
True liberty it gives,
And brother's love so fair.

Thus heart and heart through life
With mutual love are filled;
And by no causeless strife
Our union e'er is chilled.

Our hopes a God has crowned
With life-discernment free,
And all we view around,
Renews our ecstasy.
Ne'er by caprice oppressed,
Our bliss is ne'er destroyed;
More freely throbs our breast,
By fancies ne'er alloyed.

Where'er our foot we set,
The more life's path extends,
And brighter, brighter yet
Our gaze on high ascends.
We know no grief or pain,
Though all things fall and rise;
Long may we thus remain!
Eternal be our ties!

◆

CONSTANCY IN CHANGE.

Could this early bliss but rest
Constant for one single hour!
But e'en now the humid west
Scatters many a vernal shower.
Should the verdure give me joy?
'Tis to it I owe the shade;
Soon will storms its bloom destroy,
Soon will Autumn bid it fade.

Eagerly thy portion seize,
If thou wouldst possess the fruit!
Fast begin to ripen these,
And the rest already to shoot.
With each heavy storm of rain
Change comes o'er thy valley fair;
Once, alas! but not again
Can the same stream hold thee e'er.

And thyself, what erst at least
  Firm as rocks appeared to rise,
Walls and palaces thou seest
  But with ever-changing eyes.
Fled forever now the lip
  That with kisses used to glow,
And the foot, that used to skip
  O'er the mountain, like the roe.

And the hand, so true and warm,
  Ever raised in charity,
And the cunning-fashioned form, —
  All are now changed utterly.
And what used to bear thy name
  When upon yon spot it stood,
Like a rolling billow came,
  Hastening on to join the flood.

Be then the beginning found
  With the end in unison,
Swifter than the forms around
  Are themselves now fleeting on!
Thank the merit in thy breast,
  Thank the mould within thy heart,
That the Muses' favor blest
  Ne'er will perish, ne'er depart.

◆

TABLE SONG.

[Composed for the merry party already mentioned, on the occasion of the departure for France of the hereditary prince, who was one of the number, and who is especially alluded to in the third verse.]

O'ER me, — how I cannot say, —
  Heavenly rapture's growing.
Will it help to guide my way
  To yon stars all-glowing?
Yet that here I'd sooner be,
  To assert I'm able,
Where, with wine and harmony,
  I may thump the table.

Wonder not, my dearest friends,
What 'tis gives me pleasure;
For of all that earth e'er lends,
'Tis the sweetest treasure.
Therefore solemnly I swear,
With no reservation,
That maliciously I'll ne'er
Leave my present station.

Now that here we're gathered round,
Chasing cares and slumbers,
Let, methought, the goblet sound
To the bard's glad numbers!
Many a hundred mile away,
Go those we love dearly;
Therefore let us here to-day
Make the glass ring clearly!

Here's *His* health through whom we live!
I that faith inherit.
To our king the next toast give,
Honor is *his* merit,
'Gainst each in and outward foe
He's our rock and tower.
Of his maintenance thinks he though,
More that grows his power.

Next to *her* good health I drink,
Who has stirred my passion;
Of his mistress let each think,
Think in knightly fashion.
If the beauteous maid but see
Whom 'tis I now call so,
Let her smiling nod to me:
"Here's my love's health also."

To those friends, — the two or three, —
Be our next toast given,
In whose presence revel we,
In the silent even, —
Who the gloomy mist so cold
Scatter gently, lightly;
To those friends, then, new or old,
Let the toast ring brightly.

Broader now the stream rolls on,
With its waves more swelling,
While in higher, nobler tone,
Comrades, we are dwelling, —
We who with collected might,
Bravely cling together,
Both in fortune's sunshine bright,
And in stormy weather.

Just as we are gathered thus,
Others are collected;
On them, therefore, as on us,
Be Fate's smile directed!
From the spring-head to the sea,
Many a mill's revolving,
And the world's prosperity
Is the task I'm solving.

◆

WONT AND DONE.

I HAVE loved; for the first time with passion I rave!
I then was the servant, but now am the slave;
I then was the servant of all:
By this creature so charming I now am fast bound,
To love and love's guerdon she turns all around,
And her my sole mistress I call.

I've had faith; for the first time my faith is now strong!
And though matters go strangely, though matters go wrong,
To the ranks of the faithful I'm true:
Though ofttimes 'twas dark, and though ofttimes 'twas drear,
In the pressure of need, and when danger was near,
Yet the dawning of light I now view.

I have eaten; but ne'er have thus relished my food!
For when glad are the senses and joyous the blood,
At table all else is effaced:
As for youth, it but swallows, then whistles an air;
As for me, to a jovial resort I'd repair,
Where to eat and enjoy what I'd taste.

I have drunk; but have never thus relished the bowl!
For wine makes us lords, and enlivens the soul,
And loosens the trembling slave's tongue.
Let's seek not to spare then the heart-stirring drink,
For though in the barrel the old wine may sink,
In its place will fast mellow the young.

I have danced, and to dancing am pledged by a vow!
Though no caper or waltz may be raved about now,
In a dance that's becoming, whirl round.
And he who a nosegay of flowers has dressed,
And cares not for one any more than the rest,
With a garland of love is aye crowned.

Then once more be merry, and banish all woes!
For he who but gathers the blossoming rose,
By its thorns will be tickled alone.
To-day still, as yesterday, glimmers the star;
Take care from all heads that hang down to keep far,
And make but the future thine own.

◆

VANITAS, VANITATUM VANITUS.

On nothing have I set my heart,
Hurrah!
So in the world I bear my part,
Hurrah!
And whoso will be friend of mine
Must join with me, and not decline
To clink a glass of wine.

I set my heart on goods and wealth,
Hurrah!
I lost thereby my nerves and health,
Hurrah!
The coins they rolled off far and wide,
And what with one hand I did hide,
In t'other would not bide.

On woman next I set my heart,
Hurrah!
From them I suffered many a smart,
Ah ah!

The false one sought another lord,
With the true one I was greatly bored,
The best could not afford.

To travel next I did apply,
Hurrah!
From house and kindred off did fly,
Ah ah!
I'm pleased with nothing I have seen, —
The food was coarse, the bed not clean,
None knew what I did mean.

On honors next my heart I set,
Hurrah!
But lo! my neighbor more did get,
Ah ah!
And when I had advanced my name
The folks did look askance, and blame
As though I hurt their fame.

I set my heart on fighting then,
Hurrah!
And many a battle we did gain,
Ah ah!
We marched the foeman's country through,
Much profit there did not accrue, —
My leg's loss there I rue.

Now I have set my heart on naught,
Hurrah!
The whole world to my feet is brought,
Ah ah!
My song and feast to end I'm fain,
So every one your glasses drain, —
Let not a drop remain!

◆

FORTUNE OF WAR.

Naught more accursed in war I know
Than getting off scot free;
Inured to danger, on we go
In constant victory;

We first unpack, then pack again,
  With only this reward,
That when we're marching, we complain,
  And when in camp are bored.

The time for billeting comes next, —
  The peasant curses it;
Each nobleman is sorely vexed,
  'Tis hated by the cit.
Be civil, bad though be thy food,
  The clowns politely treat;
If to our hosts we're ever rude,
  Jail-bread we're forced to eat.

And when the cannon growl around,
  And small arms rattle clear,
And trumpet, trot, and drums resound,
  We merry all appear;
And as it in the fight may chance,
  We yield, then charge amain,
And now retire, and now advance,
  And yet a cross ne'er gain.

At length there comes a musket-ball,
  And hits the leg, please heaven;
And then our troubles vanish all,
  For to the town we're driven,
(Well covered by the victor's force),
  Where we in wrath first came, —
The women, frightened then, of course,
  Are loving now and tame.

Cellar and heart are opened wide,
  The cook's allowed no rest;
While beds with softest down supplied
  Are by our members pressed.
The nimble lads upon us wait,
  No sleep the hostess takes;
Her shift is torn in pieces straight, —
  What wondrous lint it makes!

If one has tended carefully
  The hero's wounded limb,
Her neighbor cannot rest, for she
  Has also tended him.

A third arrives in equal haste,
At length they all are there,
And in the middle he is placed
Of the whole band so fair!

On good authority the king
Hears how we love the fight,
And bids them cross and ribbon bring,
Our coat and breast to dight.
Say if a better fate can e’er
A son of Mars pursue!
’Midst tears at length we go from there,
Beloved and honored, too.

COPTIC SONG.

Howe’er they may wrangle, your pundits and sages,
And love of contention infects all the breed,
All the philosophers, search through all ages,
Join with one voice in the following creed:
Fools from their folly ’tis hopeless to stay!
Mules will be mules, by the law of their mulishness;
Then be advised, and leave fools to their foolishness,
What from an ass can you get but a bray?

When Merlin I questioned, the old necromancer,
As halo’d with light in his coffin he lay,
I got from the wizard a similar answer,
And thus ran the burden of what he did say:
Fools from their folly ’tis hopeless to stay!
Mules will be mules, by the law of their mulishness;
Then be advised, and leave fools to their foolishness,
What from an ass can be got but a bray?

And up on the wind-swept peaks of Armenia,
And down in the depths, far hid from the day,
Of the temples of Egypt and far Abyssinia
This, and but this, was the gospel alway:
Fools from their folly ’tis hopeless to stay!
Mules will be mules, by the law of their mulishness;
Then be advised, and leave fools to their foolishness,
What from an ass can be got but a bray?

ANOTHER.

Go! obedient to my call,
Turn to profit thy young days,
Wiser make betimes thy breast!
In Fate's balance as it sways,
Seldom is the cock at rest;
Thou must either mount, or fall,
Thou must either rule and win,
Or submissively give in,
Triumph, or else yield to clamor:
Be the anvil or the hammer.

OPEN TABLE.

Many a guest I'd see to-day,
Met to taste my dishes!
Food in plenty is prepared,
Birds, and game, and fishes.
Invitations all have had,
All proposed attending.
Johnny, go and look around!
Are they hither wending?

Pretty girls I hope to see,
Dear and guileless misses,
Ignorant how sweet it is
Giving tender kisses.
Invitations all have had,
All proposed attending.
Johnny, go and look around!
Are they hither wending?

Women also I expect,
Loving toward their spouses,
Whose rude grumbling in their breasts
Greater love but rouses.
Invitations they've had, too,
All proposed attending.
Johnny, go and look around!
Are they hither wending?

I've too asked young gentlemen,
  Who are far from haughty,
And whose purses are well stocked,
  Well behaved, not naughty.
These especially I asked,
  All proposed attending.
Johnny, go and look around!
  Are they hither wending?

Men I summoned with respect,
  Who their own wives treasure;
Who in ogling *other* Fair
  Never take a pleasure.
To my greetings they replied,
  All proposed attending.
Johnny, go and look around!
  Are they hither wending?

Then to make our joy complete,
  Poets I invited,
Who love *others*' songs far more
  Than what *they've* indited.
All acceded to my wish,
  All proposed attending.
Johnny, go and look around?
  Are they hither wending?

Not a single one appears,
  None seem this way posting.
All the soup boils fast away,
  Joints are over-roasting.
Ah, I fear that we have been
  Rather too unbending!
Johnny, tell me what you think!
  None are hither wending.

Johnny, run, and quickly bring
  Other guests to me now!
Each arriving as he is —
  That's the plan, I see now.
In the town at once 'tis known
  Every one's commending.
Johnny, open all the doors:
  All are hither wending!

THE RECKONING.

LEADER.

Let no cares now hover o'er us!
  Let the wine unsparing run!
Wilt thou swell our merry chorus?
  Hast thou all thy duty done?

SOLO.

Two young folks — the thing is curious —
  Loved each other; yesterday
Both quite mild, to-day quite furious,
  Next day, quite the deuce to pay!
If her neck she there was stooping,
  He must *here* needs pull his hair.
I revived their spirits drooping,
  And they're now a happy pair.

CHORUS.

Surely we for wine may languish!
  Let the bumper then go round!
For all sighs and groans of anguish
  Thou to-day in joy hast drowned.

SOLO.

Why, young orphan, all this wailing?
  "Would to heaven that I were dead!
For my guardian's craft prevailing
  Soon will make me beg my bread."
Knowing well the rascal genus,
  Into court I dragged the knave;
Fair the judges were between us,
  And the maiden's wealth did save.

CHORUS.

Surely we for wine may languish!
  Let the bumper then go round!
For all sighs and groans of anguish
  Thou to-day in joy hast drowned.

SOLO.

To a little fellow, quiet,
  Unpretending and subdued,
Has a big clown, running riot,
  Been to-day extremely rude.

I bethought me of my duty,
  And my courage swelled apace,
So I spoiled the rascal's beauty,
  Slashing him across the face.

CHORUS.

Surely we for wine may languish!
  Let the bumper then go round!
For all sighs and groans of anguish
  Thou to-day in joy hast drowned.

SOLO.

Brief must be my explanation,
  For I really have done naught.
Free from trouble and vexation,
  I a landlord's business bought.
There I've done with all due ardor,
  All that duty ordered me;
Each one asked me for the larder,
  And there was no scarcity.

CHORUS.

Surely we for wine may languish!
  Let the bumper then go round!
For all signs and groans of anguish
  Thou to-day in joy hast drowned.

LEADER.

Each should thus make proclamation
  Of what he did well to-day!
That's the match whose conflagration
  Should inflame our tuneful lay.
Let it be our precept ever
  To admit no waverer here!
For to act the good endeavor,
  None but rascals meek appear.

CHORUS.

Surely we for wine may languish!
  Let the bumper then go round!
For all sighs and groans of anguish
  We have now in rapture drowned.

TRIO.

Let each merry minstrel enter,
  He's right welcome to our hall!

'Tis but with the self-tormentor
That we are not liberal;
For we fear that his caprices,
That his eyebrows dark and sad,
That his grief that never ceases
Hide an empty heart, or bad.

CHORUS.

No one now for wine shall languish!
Here no minstrel shall be found,
Who all sighs and groans of anguish
Has not first in rapture drowned!

◆

MIGNON.

[This universally known poem is also to be found in *Wilhelm Meister.*]

"Knowest thou the land where citron-apples bloom,
And oranges like gold in leafy gloom,
A gentle wind from deep blue heaven blows,
The myrtle thick, and high the laurel grows?
Knowest thou it then?
'Tis there! 'Tis there!
O my true loved one, thou with me must go!

"Knowest thou the house, its porch with pillars tall,
The rooms do glitter, glitters bright the hall,
And marble statues stand, and look each one:
What's this, poor child, to thee they've done?
Knowest thou it then?
'Tis there! 'Tis there!
O my protector, thou with me must go!

"Knowest thou the hill, the bridge that hangs on clouds,
The mules in mist grope o'er the torrent loud,
In caves lay coiled the dragon's ancient hood,
The crag leaps down, and over it the flood:
Knowest thou it then?
'Tis there! 'Tis there!
Our way runs; O my father, wilt thou go?"

GENERAL CONFESSION.

In this noble ring to-day
  Let my warning shame ye!
Listen to my solemn voice, —
  Seldom does it name ye.
Many a thing have ye intended,
Many a thing have badly ended,
  And now I must blame ye.

At some moment in our lives
  We must all repent us!
So confess, with pious trust,
  All your sins momentous!
Error's crooked pathways shunning,
Let us, on the straight road running,
  Honestly content us!

Yes! we've oft, when waking, dreamed
  Let's confess it rightly;
Left undrained the brimming cup,
  When it sparkled brightly;
Many a shepherd's-hour's soft blisses,
Many a dear mouth's flying kisses
  We've neglected lightly.

Mute and silent have we sat,
  Whilst the blockheads prated,
And above e'en song divine
  Have their babblings rated;
To account we've even called us
For the moments that enthralled us
  With enjoyment freighted.

If thou'lt absolution grant
  To thy true ones ever,
We, to execute thy will,
  Ceaseless will endeavor,
From half-measures strive to wean us,
Wholly, fairly, well demean us,
  Resting, flagging never.

At all blockheads we'll at once
  Let our laugh ring clearly,
And the pearly-foaming wine

Never sip at merely.
Ne'er with eye alone give kisses,
But with boldness suck in blisses
From those lips loved dearly.

◆

ERGO BIBAMUS!

For a praiseworthy object we're now gathered here,
So, brethren, sing: Ergo bibamus!
Tho' talk may be hushed, yet the glasses ring clear,
Remember then, Ergo bibamus!
In truth 'tis an old, 'tis an excellent word,
With its sound so befitting each bosom is stirred,
And an echo the festal hall filling is heard,
A glorious Ergo bibamus!

I saw mine own love in her beauty so rare,
And bethought me of: Ergo bibamus;
So I gently approached, and she let me stand there,
While I helped myself, thinking: Bibamus!
And when she's appeared, and will clasp you and kiss,
Or when those embraces and kisses ye miss,
Take refuge, till found is some worthier bliss,
In the comforting Ergo bibamus!

I am called by my fate far away from each friend;
Ye loved ones, then: Ergo bibamus!
With wallet light-laden from hence I must wend,
So double our Ergo bibamus!
Whate'er to his treasure the niggard may add,
Yet regard for the joyous will ever be had,
For gladness lends ever its charms to the glad,
So, brethren, sing: Ergo bibamus!

And what shall we say of to-day as it flies?
I thought but of: Ergo bibamus!
'Tis one of those truly that seldom arise,
So again and again sing: Bibamus!
For joy through a wide-open portal it guides,
Bright glitter the clouds as the curtain divides,
And a form, a divine one, to greet us in glides,
While we thunder our: Ergo bibamus.

THE MINSTREL.

[This fine poem is introduced in the second book of *Wilhelm Meister.*]

"What tuneful strains salute mine ear
Without the castle walls?
Oh, let the song re-echo here,
Within our festal halls!"
Thus spake the king, the page out-hied;
The boy returned; the monarch cried:
"Admit the old man yonder!"

"All hail, ye noble lords to-night!
All hail, ye beauteous dames!
Star placed by star! What heavenly sight!
Who e'er can tell their names?
Within this glittering hall sublime,
Be closed mine eyes! 'tis not the time
For me to feast my wonder."

The minstrel straightway closed his eyes,
And woke a thrilling tone;
The knights looked on in knightly guise,
Fair looks toward earth were thrown.
The monarch, ravished by the strain,
Bade them bring forth a golden chain,
To be his numbers' guerdon.

"The golden chain give not to me,
But give the chain to those
In whose bold face we shivered see
The lances of our foes.
Or give it to thy chancellor there;
With other burdens he may bear
This one more golden burden.

"I sing, like birds of blithesome note,
That in the branches dwell;
The song that rises from the throat
Repays the minstrel well.
One boon I'd crave, if not too bold—
One bumper in a cup of gold
Be as my guerdon given."

The bowl he raised, the bowl he quaffed:
  "O drink, with solace fraught!
O, house thrice-blest, where such a draught
  A trifling gift is thought!
When Fortune smiles, remember me,
And as I thank you heartily,
  As warmly thank ye, Heaven!"

◆

EPIPHANIAS.

The three holy kings with their star's bright ray,—
They eat and they drink, but had rather not pay;
They like to eat and drink away,
They eat and drink, but had rather not pay.

The three holy kings have all come here,
In numbers not four, but three they appear;
And if a fourth joined the other three,
Increased by one their number would be.

The first am I,—the fair and the white,
I ought to be seen when the sun shines bright
But, alas! with all my spices and myrrh,
No girl now likes me,—I please not her.

The next am I,—the brown and the long,
Known well to women, known well to song,
Instead of spices, 'tis gold I bear,
And so I'm welcome everywhere.

The last am I,—the black and small,
And fain would be right merry withal.
I like to eat and to drink full measure,
I eat and drink, and give thanks with pleasure.

The three holy kings are friendly and mild,
They seek the Mother, and seek the Child;
The pious Joseph is sitting by,
The ox and the ass on their litter lie.

We're bringing gold, we're bringing myrrh,
The women incense always prefer;
And if we have wine of a worthy growth,
We three to drink like six are not loth.

As here we see fair lads and lasses,
But not a sign of oxen or asses,
We know that we have gone astray,
And so go further on our way.

◆

BALLAD

OF THE EXILED AND RETURNING COUNT.

[Goethe began to write an opera called *Löwenstuhl*, founded upon the old tradition which forms the subject of this ballad, but he never carried out his design.]

Come in, dear old man, come inside, do come on!
Down here in the hall we shall be quite alone,
  And the gate we will lock altogether.
For, mother is praying, and father is gone
  To shoot the wild wolves on the heather.
Oh! sing us a tale, then again and again,
  That my brother and I learn the measure;
To hear a fine minstrel we shall be so fain,
  The children will listen with pleasure.

"In terror of night, during hostile attack,
On house full of splendor he's turning his back,
  His most precious things he did bury.
The wicket to open the count is not slack;
  What, then, in his arms does he carry?
What, under his mantle may hidden he keep?
  What bears he to distance, what treasure?
His daughter it is, there the child is asleep" —
  The children are list'ning with pleasure.

"The morning is breaking, the world is so wide,
In valleys and mountains does shelter abide,
  The villagers kindness are showing;
A minstrel, thus long he must wander and stride,
  His beard long and longer is growing;
But lovely grows also the child on his arm,
  As though he of wealth had rich measure;
His mantle protects her from every harm" —
  The children are list'ning with pleasure.

"And time many years in its course onward drags,
The mantle is faded, it has fallen to rags,
  It could her not hold any longer.
The father beholds her, his joy never flags,
  Each day it grows stronger and stronger.
So noble, so beautiful she does appear,
  He deems her beyond ev'ry treasure;
How rich she is making her father so dear!"—
  The children are list'ning with pleasure.

"Up rides a princely and chivalrous knight,
She reaches her hand out, an alms to invite;
  It is not such gift he would grant her.
The tender hand grasping with full, manly might:
  'For life,' he exclaimed, 'I do want her!'
'Wilt make her a princess?' the old man replied,
  'Dost recognize her as thy treasure?
Then be she betrothed on this verdant hill-side!'"—
  The children are list'ning with pleasure.

"The priest, in the holy place, blesses the pair,
With joy and with grief she now hence doth repair,
  She likes not to part with her father.
The old man is wand'ring now here and now there,
  From pain he doth happiness gather.
Thus have I for years kept my daughter in sight,
  My grandchild, like her, a sweet treasure;
I bless them by day and I bless them by night"—
  The children are list'ning with pleasure.

He blesses the children, he blesses them twice;
There's noise at the gate, it is burst in a trice,
  The children the old man environ —
"Why, beggar, why, fool, doth my children entice?
  On, seize him, ye men clad in iron!
Away to the dungeon with him!" he repeats;
  From far as she hears the harsh measure,
Down hastens the mother, and flatt'ring entreats —
  The children, they hear her with pleasure.

The men stand apart from the worthy old man,
Both mother and children beseech all they can;
  The princely and proud man represses
The furious rage which their prayers but fan,

Till bursts what his spirit distresses:
"You beggarly brood, high nobility's blight!
My patience you've tried beyond measure;
You bring me destruction! It serves me quite right"—
The children hear this with displeasure.

The noble old man stands with look darting fire,
The men who have seized him still farther retire,
With fury the other is flaring!
"Oft cursed have I wedlock so mean and so dire,
Such blossoms such fruits e'er are bearing!
'Tis justly denied, that *acquired* be, the grace
E'er can, of nobility's treasure.
The beggar has borne me a beggarly race"—
The children still list with displeasure.

"And if thus the husband, the father rejects
You, rashly the most sacred ties disconnects,
You'll find in your grandsire a father!
The beggar your father so little respects
Will honor and wealth for you gather.
This castle is mine! Thou didst rob me of it;
I know where I've hid ev'ry treasure;
I bear with me warrant by royal hand writ!"—
The children are list'ning with pleasure.

"Legitimate king has returned to his land,
Gives back what was taken from true followers' band,
Laws gentle and mild is proclaiming."
The old man thus spoke with a look kind and bland,
"My son, thee no longer I'm blaming;
Return to thyself from thy fury's wild flood,
I'll loosen the seals of each treasure,
Thy princess has borne thee a true princely blood"—
The children are list'ning with pleasure.

◆

THE FAITHLESS BOY.

There was a wooer blithe and gay,—
A son of France was he,—
Who in his arms for many a day,
As though his bride were she,

A poor young maiden had caressed,
And fondly kissed, and fondly pressed,
And then at length deserted.

When this was told the nut-brown maid,
Her senses straightway fled;
She laughed and wept, and vowed and prayed,
And presently was dead.
The hour her soul its farewell took,
The boy was sad, with terror shook,
Then sprang upon his charger.

He drove his spurs into his side,
And scoured the country round;
But wheresoever he might ride,
No rest for him was found.
For seven long days and nights he rode,
It stormed, the waters overflowed,
It blustered, lightened, thundered.

On rode he through the tempest's din,
Till he a building spied;
In search of shelter crept he in,
When he his steed had tied.
And as he groped his doubtful way,
The ground began to rock and sway,—
He fell a hundred fathoms.

When he recovered from his blow,
He saw three lights pass by;
He sought in their pursuit to go,
The lights appeared to fly.
They led his footsteps all astray,
Up, down, through many a narrow way
Through ruined desert cellars.

When lo! he stood within a hall,
A hundred guests sat there,
With hollow eyes, and grinning all;
They bade him taste the fare.
He saw his sweetheart 'midst the throng,
Wrapped up in grave-clothes white and long;
She turned, and —— *

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* This ballad is introduced in Act II. of *Claudine of Villa Bella*, where it is suddenly broken off, as it is here.

THE ERL-KING.

Who rides there so late through the night dark and
 drear?
The father it is, with his infant so dear;
He holdeth the boy tightly clasped in his arm,
He holdeth him safely, he keepeth him warm.

"My son, wherefore seek'st thou thy face thus to hide?"
"Look, father, the Erl-King is close by our side!
Dost see not the Erl-King, with crown and with train?"
"My son, 'tis the mist rising over the plain."

"Oh come, thou dear infant! oh come thou with me!
Full many a game I will play there with thee;
On my strand, lovely flowers their blossoms unfold,
My mother shall grace thee with garments of gold."

"My father, my father, and dost thou not hear
The words that the Erl-King now breathes in mine ear?"
"Be calm, dearest child, 'tis thy fancy deceives;
'Tis the sad wind that sighs through the withering
 leaves."

"Wilt go, then, dear infant, wilt go with me there?
My daughters shall tend thee with sisterly care;
My daughters by night their glad festival keep,
They'll dance thee, and rock thee, and sing thee to sleep."

"My father, my father, and dost thou not see,
How the Erl-King his daughters has brought here for
 me?"
"My darling, my darling, I see it aright,
'Tis the aged gray willows deceiving thy sight."

"I love thee, I'm charmed by thy beauty, dear boy!
And if thou'rt unwilling, then force I'll employ."
"My father, my father, he seizes me fast,
Full sorely the Erl-King has hurt me at last."

The father now gallops, with terror half wild,
He grasps in his arms the poor shuddering child:
He reaches his courtyard with toil and with dread,—
The child in his arms finds he motionless, dead.

JOHANNA SEBUS.

[To the memory of an excellent and beautiful girl of seventeen, belonging to the village of Brienen, who perished on the 13th of January, 1809, whilst giving help on the occasion of the breaking up of the ice on the Rhine, and the bursting of the dam of Claverham.]

THE DAM BREAKS DOWN, THE ICE-PLAIN GROWLS,
THE FLOODS ARISE, THE WATER HOWLS.
"I'll bear thee, mother, across the swell,
'Tis not yet high, I can wade right well."
"Remember us, too! in what danger are we!
Thy fellow-lodger and children three!
The trembling woman! — Thou'rt going away!"
She bears the mother across the spray.
"Quick! haste to the mound, and awhile there wait,
I'll soon return, and all will be straight.
The mound's close by, and safe from the wet;
But take my goat, too, my darling pet!"

THE DAM DISSOLVES, THE ICE-PLAIN GROWLS,
THE FLOODS DASH ON, THE WATER HOWLS.
She places the mother safe on the shore;
Fair Susan then turns toward the flood once more.
"Oh whither? Oh whither? The breadth fast grows,
Both here and there the water o'erflows.
Wilt venture, thou rash one, the billows to brave?"
"THEY SHALL, AND THEY MUST BE PRESERVED FROM THE WAVE!"

THE DAM DISAPPEARS, THE WATER GROWLS,
LIKE OCEAN BILLOWS IT HEAVES AND HOWLS.
Fair Susan returns by the way she had tried,
The waves roar around, but she turns not aside;
She reaches the mound and the neighbor straight,
But for her and the children, alas, too late!

THE DAM DISAPPEARED, — LIKE A SEA IT GROWLS,
ROUND A HILLOCK IN CIRCLING EDDIES IT HOWLS.
The foaming abyss gapes wide, and whirls round,
The women and children are borne to the ground;
The horn of the goat by one is seized fast,
But, ah, they all must perish at last!

Fair Susan still stands there, untouched by the wave!
The youngest, the noblest, oh, who now will save?
Fair Susan still stands there, as bright as a star,
But, alas! all hope, all assistance is far.
The foaming waters around her roar.
To save her no bark pushes off from the shore.
Her gaze once again she lifts up to heaven,
Then gently away by the flood she is driven.

NO DAM, NO PLAIN! TO MARK THE PLACE
SOME STRAGGLING TREES ARE THE ONLY TRACE
The rushing water the wilderness covers,
Yet Susan's image still over it hovers.—
The water sinks, the plains re-appear.
Fair Susan's lamented with many a tear,—
May he who refuses her story to tell,
Be neglected in life and in death as well!

◆

THE VIOLET.

UPON the mead a violet stood,
Retiring, and of modest mood,
In truth, a violet fair.
Then came a youthful shepherdess,
And roamed with sprightly joyousness,
And blithely wooed
With carols sweet the air.

"Ah!" thought the violet, "had I been
For but the smallest moment e'en
Nature's most beauteous flower,
'Till gathered by my love, and pressed,
When weary, 'gainst her gentle breast,
For e'en, for e'en
One quarter of an hour!"

Alas! alas! the maid drew nigh,
The violet failed to meet her eye,
She crushed the violet sweet.
It sank and died, yet murmured not:
"And if I die, oh, happy lot,
For her I die,
And at her very feet!"

THE BEAUTEOUS FLOWER.

SONG OF THE IMPRISONED COUNT.

COUNT.

I KNOW a flower of beauty rare,
Ah, how I hold it dear!
To seek it I would fain repair,
Were I not prisoned here.
My sorrow sore oppresses me,
For when I was at liberty,
I had it close beside me.

Though from this castle's walls so steep
I cast mine eyes around,
And gaze oft from the lofty keep,
The flower cannot be found.
Whoe'er would bring it to my sight,
Whether a vassal he, or knight,
My dearest friend I'd deem him.

THE ROSE.

I blossom fair, — thy tale of woes
I hear from 'neath thy grate.
Thou doubtless meanest me, the rose,
Poor knight of high estate!
Thou hast in truth a lofty mind;
The queen of flowers then is enshrined,
I doubt not, in thy bosom.

COUNT.

Thy red, in dress of green arrayed,
As worth all praise I hold;
And so thou'rt treasured by each maid,
Like precious stones or gold.
Thy wreath adorns the fairest face,
But still thou'rt not the flower whose grace
I honor here in silence.

THE LILY.

The rose is wont with pride to swell,
And ever seeks to rise;
But gentle sweethearts love full well
The lily's charms to prize.

The heart that fills a bosom true,
That is, like me, unsullied, too,
  My merit values duly.

COUNT.

In truth, I hope myself unstained,
  And free from grievous crime;
Yet I am here a prisoner chained,
  And pass in grief my time.
To me thou art an image sure
Of many a maiden, mild and pure,
  And yet I know a dearer

THE PINK.

That must be me, the pink, who scent
  The warder's garden here.
Or wherefore is he so intent
  My charms with care to rear?
My petals stand in beauteous ring,
Sweet incense all around I fling,
  And boast a thousand colors.

COUNT.

The pink, in truth, we should not slight,
  It is the gardener's pride;
It now must stand exposed to light,
  Now in the shade abide.
Yet what can make the Count's heart glow
Is no mere pomp of outward show;
  It is a silent flower.

THE VIOLET.

Here stand I, modestly half hid,
  And fain would silence keep;
Yet since to speak I now am bid,
  I'll break my silence deep.
If, worthy Knight, I am that flower,
It grieves me that I have not power
  To breathe forth all my sweetness.

COUNT.

The violet's charms I prize, indeed,
  So modest 'tis, and fair,
And smells so sweet; yet more I need

To ease my heavy care.
The truth I'll whisper in thine ear:
Upon these rocky heights so drear,
I cannot find the loved one.

The truest maiden 'neath the sky
Roams near the stream below,
And breathes forth many a gentle sigh,
Till I from hence can go.
And when she plucks a floweret blue,
And says "Forget-me-not!"—I, too,
Though far away, can feel it.

Ay, distance only swells love's might,
When fondly love a pair;
Though prisoned in the dungeon's night,
In life I linger there;
And when my heart is breaking nigh,
"Forget-me-not!" is all I cry,
And straightway life returneth.

◆

SIR CURT'S WEDDING JOURNEY,

With a bridegroom's joyous bearing,
Mounts Sir Curt his noble beast,
To his mistress' home repairing,
There to hold his wedding feast;
When a threatening foe advances
From a desert, rocky spot;
For the fray they couch their lances,
Not delaying, speaking not.

Long the doubtful fight continues,
Victory then for Curt declares;
Conqueror, though with wearied sinews,
Forward on his road he fares.
When he sees, though strange it may be,
Something 'midst the foliage move;
Tis a mother with her baby,
Stealing softly through the grove!

And upon the spot she beckons —
  "Wherefore, love, this speed so wild?
Of the wealth thy storehouse reckons,
  Hast thou naught to give thy child?"
Flames of rapture now dart through him,
  And he longs for nothing more,
While the mother seemeth to him
  Lovely as the maid of yore.

But he hears his servants blowing,
  And bethinks him of his bride;
And ere long, while onward going,
  Chances past a fair to ride;
In the booths he forthwith buys him
  For his mistress many a pledge;
But, alas! some Jews surprise him,
  And long-standing debts allege.

And the courts of justice duly
  Sends the knight to prison straight.
Oh, accursèd story, truly!
  For a hero, what a fate!
Can my patience such things weather?
  Great is my perplexity.
Women, debts, and foes together, —
  Ah, no knight escapes scot free!

◆

WEDDING SONG.

The tale of the Count our glad song shall record
  Who had in this castle his dwelling,
Where now are ye feasting the new-married lord,
  His grandson of whom we are telling.
The Count as Crusader had blazoned his fame,
Through many a triumph exalted his name,
And when on his steed to his dwelling he came,
  His castle still reared its proud head,
  But servants and wealth had all fled.

'Tis true that thou, Count, hast returned to thy home,
  But matters are faring there ill.
The winds through the chambers at liberty roam,
  And blow through the windows at will.

What's best to be done in a cold autumn night?
Full many I've passed in more piteous plight;
The morn ever settles the matter aright.
    Then quick, while the moon shines so clear,
    To bed on the straw, without fear.

And whilst in a soft pleasing slumber he lay,
    A motion he feels 'neath his bed.
The rat, an he likes it, may rattle away!
    Ay, had he but crumbs there outspread!
But lo! there appears a diminutive wight,
A dwarf 'tis, yet graceful, and bearing a light,
With orator-gestures that notice invite,
    At the feet of the Count on the floor
    Who sleeps not, though weary full sore.

"We've long been accustomed to hold here our feast
    Since thou from thy castle first went;
And as we believed thou wert far in the East,
    To revel e'en now we were bent.
And if thou'lt allow it, and seek not to chide,
We dwarfs will all banquet with pleasure and pride,
To honor the wealthy, the beautiful bride"—
    Says the Count with a smile, half asleep:—
    "Ye're welcome your quarters to keep!"

Three knights then advance, riding all in a group,
    Who under the bed were concealed;
And then is a singing and noise-making troop
    Of strange little figures revealed;
And wagon on wagon with all kinds of things—
The clatter they cause through the ear loudly rings—
The like ne'er was seen save in castles of kings;
    At length, in a chariot of gold,
    The bride and the guest, too, behold!

Then all at full gallop make haste to advance,
    Each chooses his place in the hall;
With whirling and waltzing, and light joyous dance,
    They begin with their sweethearts the ball.

The fife and the fiddle all merrily sound,
They twine, and they glide, and with nimbleness bound,
They whisper, and chatter, and clatter around;
The Count on the scene casts his eye,
And seems in a fever to lie.

They hustle, and bustle, and rattle away
On table, on bench, and on stool;
Then all who had joined in the festival gay
With their partners attempt to grow cool.
The hams and the sausages nimbly they bear,
And meat, fish, and poultry in plenty are there,
Surrounded with wine of the vintage most rare;
And when they have revelled full long,
They vanish at last with a song.

. . . . .

And if we're to sing all that further occurred,
Pray cease ye to bluster and prate;
For what he so gladly in *small* saw and heard,
He enjoyed and he practised in *great.*
For trumpets, and singing, and shouts without end
On the bridal-train, chariots and horsemen attend,
They come and appear, and they bow and they bend,
In merry and countless array,
Thus was it, thus is it to-day.

THE FISHERMAN.

The water rushed, the water swelled,
A fisherman sat by,
And gazed upon his dancing float
With tranquil-dreaming eye.
And as he sits, and as he looks,
The gurgling waves arise;
A maid, all bright with water drops,
Stands straight before his eyes.

She sang to him, she spake to him:
"My fish why dost thou snare,
With human wit and human guile,
Into the killing air?

Couldst see how happy fishes live
  Under the stream so clear,
Thyself would plunge into the stream,
  And live forever there.

"Bathe not the lovely sun and moon
  Within the cool, deep sea,
And with wave-breathing faces rise
  In twofold witchery?
Lure not the misty heaven-deeps,
  So beautiful and blue?
Lures not thine image, mirrored in
  The fresh eternal dew?"

The water rushed, the water swelled,
  It clasped his feet, I wis;
A thrill went through his yearning heart
  As when two lovers kiss!
She spake to him, she sang to him:
  Resistless was her strain;
Half drew him in, half lured him in;
  He ne'er was seen again.

◆

THE RAT-CATCHER.

I AM the bard known far and wide,
The travelled rat-catcher beside;
A man most needful to this town,
So glorious through its old renown.
However many rats I see,
How many weasels there may be,
I cleanse the place from every one,
All needs but helter-skelter run.

Sometimes the bard so full of cheer
As a child-catcher will appear,
Who e'en the wildest captive brings,
Whene'er his golden tales he sings.
However proud each boy in heart,
However much the maidens start,
I bid the chords sweet music make,
And all must follow in my wake.

Sometimes the skilful bard ye view
In form of maiden-catcher, too;
For he no city enters e'er,
Without effecting wonders there.
However coy may be each maid,
Howe'er the women seem afraid,
Yet all will love-sick be ere long
To sound of magic lute and song.
[*Da Capo.*]

◆

THE KING OF THULE.

[This ballad is also introduced in *Faust,* where it is sung by Margaret.]

There was a king in Thule,
  Was faithful till the grave,
To whom his mistress, dying,
  A golden goblet gave.

Nought was to him more precious;
  He drained it at every bout;
His eyes with tears ran over,
  As oft as he drank thereout.

When came his time of dying,
  The towns in his land he told,
Naught else to his heir denying
  Except the goblet of gold.

He sat at the royal banquet
  With his knights of high degree,
In the lofty hall of his father
  In the castle by the sea.

There stood the old carouser,
  And drank the last life-glow;
And hurled the hallowed goblet
  Into the tide below.

He saw it plunging and filling,
  And sinking deep in the sea:
Then fell his eyelids forever,
  And nevermore drank he!

THE TREASURE-SEEKER.

I.

Many weary days I suffered,
  Sick of heart and poor of purse;
Riches are the greatest blessing —
  Poverty the deepest curse!
Till at last to dig a treasure
  Forth I went into the wood —
"Fiend! my soul is thine forever!"
  And I signed the scroll with blood.

II.

Then I drew the magic circles,
  Kindled the mysterious fire,
Placed the herbs and bones in order,
  Spoke the incantation dire.
And I sought the buried metal
  With a spell of mickle might —
Sought it as my master taught me;
  Black and stormy was the night.

III.

And I saw a light appearing
  In the distance, like a star;
When the midnight hour was tolling,
  Came it waxing from afar:
Came it flashing, swift and sudden,
  As if fiery wine it were,
Flowing from an open chalice,
  Which a beauteous boy did bear.

IV.

And he wore a lustrous chaplet,
  And his eyes were full of thought,
As he stepped into the circle
  With the radiance that he brought.
And he bade me taste the goblet;
  And I thought — "It cannot be,
That this boy should be the bearer
  Of the Demon's gifts to me!"

V.

"Taste the draught of pure existence
Sparkling in this golden urn,
And no more with baleful magic
Shalt thou hitherward return.
Do not seek for treasures longer;
Let thy future spell-words be,
Days of labor, nights of resting:
So shall peace return to thee!"

◆

THE SPINNER.

As I calmly sat and span,
Toiling with all zeal,
Lo! a young and handsome man
Passed my spinning-wheel.

And he praised,—what harm was there?—
Sweet the things he said—
Praised my flax-resembling hair,
And the even thread.

He with this was not content,
But must needs do more;
And in twain the thread was rent,
Though 'twas safe before.

And the flax's stonelike weight
Needed to be told;
But no longer was its state
Valued as of old.

When I took it to the weaver,
Something felt I start,
And more quickly, as with fever,
Throbbed my trembling heart.

Then I bear the thread at length
Through the heat, to bleach;
But, alas, I scarce have strength
To the pool to reach.

What I in my little room
Span so fine and slight,—
As was likely, I presume—
Came at last to light.

THE YOUTH AND THE MILL-STREAM.

[This sweet Ballad, and the one entitled *The Maid of the Mill's Repentance*, were written on the occasion of a visit paid by Goethe to Switzerland. *The Maid of the Mill's Treachery*, to which the latter forms the sequel, was not written till the following year.]

YOUTH.

Pretty brooklet, gaily glancing
  In the morning sun,
Why so joyous in thy dancing?
  Whither dost thou run?
What is't lures thee to the vale?
Tell me, if thou hast a tale.

BROOK.

Youth! I was a brooklet lately,
  Wandering at my will;
Then I might have moved sedately,
  Now, to yonder mill,
Must I hurry, swift and strong,
  Therefore do I race along.

YOUTH.

Brooklet, happy in thy duty,
  Nathless thou art free;
Knowest not the power of beauty
  That enchaineth me!
Looks the miller's comely daughter
Ever kindly on thy water?

BROOK.

Early, comes she every morning,
  From some blissful dream;
And, so sweet in her adorning,
  Bends above my stream.
Then her bosom, white as snow,
Makes my chilly waters glow.

YOUTH.

If her beauty brings such gladness,
  Brooklet, unto thee,
Marvel not if I to madness
  Should enflamed be.
O that I could hope to move her!
Once to see her is to love her

BROOK.

Then careering — ah, so proudly!
Rush I o'er the wheel,
And the merry mill speaks loudly
All the joy I feel.
Show me but the miller's daughter,
And more swiftly flows my water.

YOUTH.

Nay, but, brooklet, tell me truly,
Feelest thou no pain,
When she smiles, and bids thee duly
Go, nor turn again?
Hath that simple smile no cunning,
Brook, to stay thee in thy running?

BROOK.

Hard it is to lose her shadow,
Hard to pass away;
Slowly, sadly, down the meadow,
Uninspired I stray.
O, if I might have my will,
Back to her I'd hasten still!

YOUTH.

Brook! my love thou comprehendest;
Fare thee well awhile;
One day, when thou hither wendest,
May'st thou see me smile.
Go, and in thy gentlest fashion,
Tell that maiden all my passion?

◆

THE MAID OF THE MILL'S TREACHERY.

[This Ballad is introduced in the *Wanderjahre*, in a tale called *The Foolish Pilgrim.*]

Whence comes our friend so hastily,
When scarce the eastern sky is gray?
Hath he just ceased, though cold it be,
In yonder holy spot to pray?
The brook appears to hem his path,
Would he barefooted o'er it go?
Why curse his orisons in wrath,
Across those heights beclad with snow?

Alas! his warm bed he hath left,
  Where he had looked for bliss, I ween;
And if his cloak, too, had been reft,
  How fearful his disgrace had been!
By yonder villain sorely pressed,
  His wallet from him had been torn;
Our hapless friend has been undressed,—
  Left well nigh naked as when born.

The reason why he came this road,
  Is that he sought a pair of eyes,
Which, at the mill, as brightly glowed
  As those that are in Paradise.
He will not soon again be there
  From out the house he quickly hied,
And when he gained the open air,
  Thus bitterly and loudly cried:—

"Within her gaze, so dazzling bright,
  No word of treachery I could read;
She seemed to see me with delight,
  Yet planned e'en then this cruel deed.
Could I, when basking in her smile,
  Dream of the treason in her breast?
She bade kind Cupid stay awhile,
  And he was there to make us blest.

"To taste of love's sweet ecstasy
  Throughout the night that endless seemed,
And for her mother's help to cry
  Only when morning sunlight beamed!
A dozen of her kith and kin,
  A very human flood, in-pressed,
Her cousins came, her aunts peered in,
  And uncles, brothers, and the rest.

"Then what a tumult, fierce and loud!
  Each seemed a beast of prey to be;
The maiden's honor all the crowd,
  With fearful shout, demand of me.
Why should they, madmen-like, begin
  To fall upon a guiltless youth?
For he who such a prize would win,
  Far nimbler needs must be, in truth.

"The way to follow up with skill
  His freaks, by Love betimes is known:
He ne'er will leave, within a mill,
  Sweet flowers for sixteen years alone.—
They stole my clothes away, — yes, all!
  And tried my cloak beside to steal.
How strange that any house so small
  So many rascals could conceal!

"Then I sprang up, and raved, and swore,
  To force a passage through them there.
I saw the treacherous maid once more,
  And she was still, alas, *so* fair!
They all gave way before my wrath,
  Wild outcries flew about pell-mell;
At length I managed to rush forth,
  With voice of thunder, from that hell.

"As maidens of the town we fly,
  We'll shun you maidens of the village!
Leave it to those of quality,
  Their humble worshippers to pillage!
Yet if ye are of practised skill,
  And of all tender ties afraid,
Exchange your lovers, if ye will,
  But never let them be betrayed."

Thus sings he in the winter-night,
  While not a blade of grass was green.
I laughed to see his piteous plight,
  For it was well-deserved, I ween.
And may this be the fate of all,
  Who treat by day their true loves ill,
And, with foolhardy daring, crawl
  By night to Cupid's treacherous mill!

◆

THE MAID OF THE MILL'S REPENTANCE.

YOUTH.

AWAY, thou swarthy witch! Go forth
  From out my house, I tell thee!
Or else I needs must, in my wrath,
    Expel thee!

What's this thou singest so falsely, forsooth
Of love and a maiden's silent truth?
Who'll trust to such a story!

GYPSY.

I sing of a maid's repented fears,
And long and bitter yearning;
Her levity changed to truth and tears
All-burning.
She dreads no more the threats of her mother,
She dreads far less the blows of her brother,
Than the dearly-loved one's hatred.

YOUTH.

Of selfishness sing, and treacherous lies,
Of murder and thievish plunder!
Such actions false will cause no surprise,
Or wonder.
When they share their booty, both clothes and purse,
As bad as you gypsies, and even worse,
Such tales find ready credence.

GYPSY.

"Alas, alas! oh, what have I done?
Can listening aught avail me?
I hear him toward my room hasten on,
To hail me.
My heart beat high, to myself I said:
'O would that thou hadst never betrayed
That night of love to thy mother!'"

YOUTH.

Alas! I foolishly ventured there,
For the cheating silence misled me,
Ah, sweetest! let me to thee repair,—
Nor dread me!
When suddenly rose a fearful din,
Her mad relations came pouring in.
My blood still boils in my body!

GYPSY.

"Oh when will return an hour like this?
I pine in silent sadness;
I've thrown away my only true bliss
With madness.

Alas, poor maid! O pity my youth!
My brother was then full cruel in truth
To treat the loved one so basely!"

THE POET.

The swarthy woman then went inside,
To the spring in the courtyard yonder;
Her eyes from their stain she purified,
And, — wonder! —
Her face and eyes were radiant and bright,
And the maid of the mill was disclosed to the sight
Of the startled and angry stripling.

THE MAID OF THE MILL.

Thou sweetest, fairest, dearly-loved life!
Before thine anger I cower;
But blows I dread not, nor sharp-edged knife, —
This hour
Of sorrow and love to thee I'll sing,
And myself before thy feet I'll fling,
And either live or die there!

YOUTH.

Affection, say, why buried so deep
In my heart hast thou lain hidden?
By whom hast thou now to awake from thy sleep
Been bidden?
Ah, love, that thou art immortal I see!
Nor knavish cunning nor treachery
Can destroy thy life so godlike.

THE MAID OF THE MILL.

If still, with as fond and heartfelt love,
As thou once didst swear, I'm cherished,
Then naught of the rapture we used to prove
Is perished.
So take the woman so dear to thy breast!
In her young and innocent charms be blest,
For all are thine from henceforward!

BOTH.

Now, sun, sink to rest! Now, moon, arise!
Ye stars, be now shining, now darkling!
A star of love now gleams in the skies,
All sparkling!

As long as the fountain may spring and run,
So long will we two be blended in one,
Upon each other's bosoms!

◆

THE WALKING BELL.

A child refused to go betimes
To church like other people;
He roamed abroad, when rang the chimes
On Sundays from the steeple.

His mother said: "Loud rings the bell,
Its voice ne'er think of scorning;
Unless thou wilt behave thee well,
'Twill fetch thee without warning."

The child then thought: "High over head
The bell is safe suspended —"
So to the fields he straightway sped
As if 'twas school-time ended.

The bell now ceased as bell to ring,
Roused by the mother's twaddle;
But soon ensued a dreadful thing! —
The bell begins to waddle.

It waddles fast, though strange it seem;
The child, with trembling wonder,
Runs off, and flies, as in a dream;
The bell would draw him under.

He finds the proper time at last,
And straightway nimbly rushes
To church, to chapel, hastening fast
Through pastures, plains, and bushes.

Each Sunday and each feast as well,
His late disaster heeds he;
The moment that he hears the bell,
No other summons needs he.

◆

Poets' art is ever able
To endow with truth mere fable.

THE TRAVELLER AND THE FARM MAIDEN.

HE.

Canst thou give, O fair and matchless maiden,
'Neath the shadow of the lindens yonder, —
Where I'd fain one moment cease to wander, —
Food and drink to one so heavy laden?

SHE.

Wouldst thou find refreshment, traveller weary,
Bread, ripe fruit, and cream, to meet thy wishes, —
None but Nature's plain and homely dishes, —
Near the spring may soothe thy wanderings dreary.

HE.

Dreams of old acquaintance now pass through me,
Ne'er-forgotten queen of hours of blisses:
Likenesses I've often found, but *this* is
One that quite a marvel seemeth to me!

SHE.

Travellers often wonder beyond measure,
But their wonder soon see cause to smother;
Fair and dark are often like each other,
Both inspire the mind with equal pleasure.

HE.

Not now for the first time I surrender
To this form, in humble adoration;
It was brightest midst the constellatio
In the hall adorned with festal splendor.

SHE.

Be thou joyful that 'tis in my power
To complete thy strange and merry story!
Silks behind her, full of purple glory,
Floated, when thou sawest her in that hour.

HE.

No, in truth, thou hast not sung it rightly!
Spirits may have told thee all about it;
Pearls and gems they spoke of, do not doubt it, —
By her gaze eclipsed, — it gleamed so brightly!

SHE.

This one thing I certainly collected:
That the fair one — (say naught, I entreat thee!)
Fondly hoping once again to meet thee,
Many a castle in the air erected.

HE.

By each wind I ceaselessly was driven,
Seeking gold and honor, too, to capture:
When my wand'rings end, then oh, what rapture,
If to find that form again 'tis given!

SHE.

'Tis the daughter of the race now banished
That thou seest, not her likeness only,
Helen and her brother, glad though lonely,
Till this farm of their estate now vanished.

HE.

But the owner surely is not wanting
Of these plains, with ev'ry beauty teeming?
Verdant fields, broad meads, and pastures gleaming,
Gushing springs, all heavenly and enchanting.

SHE.

Thou must hunt the world through, wouldst thou find him! —
We have wealth enough in our possession,
And intend to purchase the succession,
When the good man leaves the world behind him.

HE.

I have learnt the owner's own condition,
And, fair maiden, thou indeed canst buy it;
But the cost is great, I won't deny it, —
Helen is the price, — with thy permission!

SHE.

Did then fate and rank keep us asunder,
And must Love take this road, and no other?
Yonder comes my dear and trusty brother!
What will *he* say to it all, I wonder?

◆

Turn to good account thy day;
Wilt aught lay hold on? go not far away.

THE PAGE AND THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

PAGE.

WHERE goest thou? Where?
Miller's daughter so fair!
  Thy name, pray? —

MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

'Tis Lizzy.

PAGE.

Where goest thou? Where?
With the rake in thy hand?

MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

Father's meadows and land
  To visit, I'm busy.

PAGE.

Dost go there alone?

MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

By this rake, sir, 'tis shown
  That we're making the hay;
And the pears ripen fast
In the garden at last,
  So I'll pick them to-day.

PAGE.

Is't a silent thicket I yonder view?

MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

Oh, yes! there are two;
  There's one on each side.

PAGE.

I'll follow thee soon;
When the sun burns at noon,
  We'll go there, ourselves from his rays to hide
And then in some glade all-verdant and deep —

MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

Why, people would say —

PAGE.

Within mine arms thou gently wilt sleep.

MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

Your pardon, I pray!
Whoever is kissed by the miller-maid,
Upon the spot must needs be betrayed.
'Twould give me distress
To cover with white
Your pretty dark dress.
Equal with equal! then all is right!
That's the motto in which I delight.
I am in love with the miller-boy;
He wears nothing that I could destroy.

◆

FAITHFUL ECKART.

"Oh, would we were further! Oh, would we were home,
The phantoms of night tow'rd us hastily come,
The band of the Sorceress sisters.
They hitherward speed, and on finding us here,
They'll drink, though with toil we have fetched it, the beer,
And leave us the pitchers all empty."

Thus speaking, the children with fear take to flight,
When sudden an old man appears in their sight;
"Be quiet, child! children, be quiet!
From hunting they come, and their thirst they would still,
So leave them to swallow as much as they will,
And the Evil Ones then will be gracious."

As said, so 'twas done! and the phantoms draw near,
And shadowlike seem they, and gray they appear,
Yet blithely they sip and they revel:
The beer has all vanished, the pitchers are void;
With cries and with shouts the wild hunters, o'erjoyed,
Speed onward o'er vale and o'er mountain.

The children in terror fly nimbly toward home,
And with them the kind one is careful to come:
"My darlings, oh, be not so mournful!"—
"They'll blame us and beat us until we are dead."—
"No, no! ye will find that all goes well," he said;
"Be silent as mice, then, and listen!

"And he by whose counsels thus wisely ye're taught,
Is he who with children loves ever to sport,
The trusty and faithful old Eckart.
Ye have heard of the wonder for many a day,
But ne'er had a proof of the marvellous lay, —
Your hands hold a proof most convincing."

They arrive at their home, and their pitchers they place
By the side of their parents, with fear on their face,
Awaiting a beating and scolding.
But see what they're tasting: the choicest of beer!
Though three times and four times they quaff the good cheer,
The pitchers remain still unemptied.

The marvel it lasts till the dawning of day;
All people who hear of it doubtless will say:
"What happened at length to the pitchers?"
In secret the children they smile, as they wait;
At last, though, they stammer, and stutter, and prate,
And straightway the pitchers were empty.

And if, children, with kindness addressed ye may be,
Whether father, or master, or alderman he,
Obey him, and follow his bidding!
And if 'tis unpleasant to bridle the tongue,
Yet talking is bad, silence good for the young —
And then will the beer fill your pitchers!

THE DANCE OF THE DEAD.

The warder he gazes at dead o' the night
On the graveyards under him lying,
The moon into clearness throws all by her light,
The night with the daylight is vying.
There's a stir in the graves, and forth from their tombs
The form of a man, then a woman next looms
In garments long trailing and snowy.

They stretch themselves out, and with eager delight
Join the bones for the revel and dancing, —
Young and old, rich and poor, the lady and knight,
Their trains are a hinderance to dancing.

And since here by shame they no longer are bound,
They shuffle them off, and lo, strewn lie around
Their garments on each little hillock.

Here rises a shank, and a leg wobbles there
With lewd diabolical gesture;
And clatter and rattle of bones you might hear,
As of one beating sticks to a measure.
This seems to the warder a laughable game:
Then the tempter, low whispering, up to him came:
"In one of their shrouds go and wrap thee."

'Twas done soon as said; then he gained in wild flight
Concealment behind the church portal,
The moon all the while throws her bright beams of light
On the dance where they revel and sport all.
First one, then another, dispersed all are they,
And donning their shrouds steal the spectres away,
And under the graves all is quiet.

But one of them stumbles and fumbles along,
'Midst the tombstones groping intently;
But none of his comrades have done him this wrong,
His shroud in the breeze 'gins to scent he.
He rattles the door of the tower, but can find
No entrance,— good luck to the warder behind!—
'Tis barred with blest crosses of metal.

His shroud he must have, or rest can he ne'er;
And so, without further preambles,
The old Gothic carving he grips then and there,
From turret to pinnacle scrambles.
Alas for the warder! all's over, I fear;
From buttress to buttress in dev'lish career
He climbs like a long-legged spider.

The warder he trembles, and pale doth he look,
That shroud he would gladly be giving,
When piercing transfixed it a sharp-pointed hook!
He thought his last hour he was living.
Clouds cover already the vanishing moon,
With thunderous clang beats the clock a loud *One*,—
Below lies the skeleton, shattered.

EFFECT AT A DISTANCE.

The Queen she stands in her castle's proud hall,
Where all brightly the tapers flame;
"Now hie thee, sir page" (he came at her call),
"And fetch me my purse for the game;
It lies close at hand
On the marble stand."
To the palace end quickly away
Sped the page without further delay.

By chance, near the Queen her sherbet did sip
A lady, the fairest of all;
In shivers the cup fell dashed from her lip,—
Ah me, what a terrible fall!
Such carelessness! drest
In her gala vest!
Sped the lady without more delay
To the palace end quickly away.

The page as back on his errand he flew,
In trouble the fair lady met;
Both page and lady, though none of them knew,
Their hearts on each other had set.
O joy and delight!
O fortunate plight!
How they fell upon each other's breast!
How they kissed and embraced and caressed;

Now severed at last and parted are they!
To her room the fair lady ran,
Back to the Queen sped the page on his way,
Past many a dagger and fan.
His vest by the Queen
All spotted was seen;
From her eyes there was nothing to hide,
With the famed Queen of Sheba she vied.

The palace duenna she called aside:
"You said in our late wordy war,—
And arguments stout and stiff you applied,—
That spirit acts not from afar;

In presence alone
Its traces are shown,
But nothing can work from afar,—
No, not even a heavenly star.

"Now look! But just now where standing we are,
Was scattered a sweet beverage,
And at the same instant, though distant and far,
It spotted the vest of the page.—
Go, get newly clad,
My heart is made glad;
My argument thus for upholding
I'll pay, and so save you a scolding."

◆

THE BRIDE OF CORINTH.

(First published in Schiller's *Horen*, in connection with a friendly contest in the art of ballad-writing between the two great poets, to which many of their finest works are owing.)

I.

A YOUTH to Corinth, whilst the city slumbered,
Came from Athens: though a stranger there,
Soon among its townsmen to be numbered,
For a bride awaits him, young and fair.
From their childhood's years
They were plighted feres,
So contracted by their parents' care.

II.

But may not his welcome there be hindered?
Dearly must he buy it, would he speed.
He is still a heathen with his kindred,
She and hers washed in the Christian creed.
When new faiths are born,
Love and troth are torn
Rudely from the heart, howe'er it bleed.

III.

All the house is hushed; — to rest retreated
Father, daughters — not the mother quite;
She the guest with cordial welcome greeted,
Led him to a room with tapers bright;
Wine and food she brought,
Ere of them he thought,
Then departed with a fair good-night.

IV.

But he felt no hunger, and unheeded
Left the wine, and eager for the rest
Which his limbs, forspent with travel, needed,
On the couch he laid him, still undressed.
There he sleeps — when lo!
Onwards gliding slow,
At the door appears a wondrous guest.

V.

By the waning lamp's uncertain gleaming
There he sees a youthful maiden stand,
Robed in white, of still and gentle seeming,
On her brow a black and golden band.
When she meets his eyes,
With a quick surprise
Starting, she uplifts a pallid hand.

VI.

"Is a stranger here, and nothing told me?
Am I then forgotten even in name?
Ah! 'tis thus within my cell they hold me,
And I now am covered o'er with shame!
Pillow still thy head
There upon thy bed,
I will leave thee quickly as I came."

VII.

"Maiden — darling! Stay, O stay!" and, leaping
From the couch before her stands the boy:
"Ceres — Bacchus, here their gifts are heaping,
And thou bringest Amor's gentle joy!
Why with terror pale?
Sweet one, let us hail
These bright gods their festive gifts employ."

VIII.

"Oh, no — no! Young stranger, come not nigh me;
Joy is not for me, nor festive cheer.
Ah! such bliss may ne'er be tasted by me,
Since my mother, in fantastic fear,
By long sickness bowed,
To heaven's service vowed
Me, and all the hopes that warmed me here.

IX.

"They have left our hearth, and left it lonely, —
The old gods, that bright and jocund train.
One, unseen, in heaven, is worshipped only,
And upon the cross a Saviour slain;
Sacrifice is here,
Not of lamb nor steer,
But of human woe and human pain."

X.

And he asks, and all her words doth ponder, —
"Can it be that in this silent spot,
I behold thee, thou surpassing wonder!
My sweet bride, so strangely to me brought?
Be mine only now —
See, our parents' vow
Heaven's good blessing hath for us besought."

XI.

"No! thou gentle heart," she cried in anguish;
"'Tis not mine, but 'tis my sister's place;
When in lonely cell I weep and languish,
Think, oh, think of me in her embrace!
I think but of thee —
Pining drearily,
Soon beneath the earth to hide my face!"

XII.

"Nay! I swear by yonder flame which burneth,
Fanned by Hymen, lost thou shalt not be;
Droop not thus, for my sweet bride returneth
To my father's mansion back with me!
Dearest, tarry here!
Taste the bridal cheer,
For our spousal spread so wondrously!"

XIII.

Then with word and sigh their troth they plighted,
Golden was the chain she bade him wear,
But the cup he offered her she slighted,
Silver, wrought with cunning past compare.
"That is not for me;
All I ask of thee
Is one little ringlet of thy hair!"

XIV.

Dully boomed the midnight hour unhallowed,
And then first her eyes began to shine;
Eagerly with pallid lips she swallowed
Hasty draughts of purple-tinctured wine;
But the wheaten bread,
As in shuddering dread,
Put she always by with loathing sign.

XV.

And she gave the youth the cup: he drained it,
With impetuous haste he drained it dry;
Love was in his fevered heart, and pained it,
Till it ached for joy she must deny.
But the maiden's fears
Stayed him, till in tears
On the bed he sank, with sobbing cry.

XVI.

And she leans above him — "Dear one, still thee!
Ah, how sad am I to see thee so!
But, alas! these limbs of mine would chill thee:
Love! they mantle not with passion's glow;
Thou wouldst be afraid,
Didst thou find the maid
Thou hast chosen, cold as ice or snow."

XVII.

Round her waist his eager arms he bended,
With the strength that youth and love inspire;
"Wert thou even from the grave ascended,
I could warm thee well with my desire!"
Panting kiss on kiss!
Overflow of bliss!
"Burn'st thou not, and feelest me on fire?"

XVIII.

Closer yet they cling, and intermingling,
Tears and broken sobs proclaim the rest;
His hot breath through all her frame is tingling,
There they lie, caressing and caressed.
His impassioned mood
Warms her torpid blood,
Yet there beats no heart within her breast!

XIX.

Meanwhile goes the mother, softly creeping
Through the house, on needful cares intent
Hears a murmur, and, while all are sleeping,
Wonders at the sounds, and what they meant.
Who was whispering so?—
Voices soft and low,
In mysterious converse strangely blent.

XX.

Straightway by the door herself she stations,
There to be assured what was amiss;
And she hears love's fiery protestations,
Words of ardor and endearing bliss:
"Hark, the cock! 'Tis light!
But to-morrow night
Thou wilt come again?" and kiss on kiss.

XXI.

Quick the latch she raises, and, with features
Anger-flushed, into the chamber hies.
"Are there in my house such shameless creatures,
Minions to the stranger's will?" she cries.
By the dying light,
Who is't meets her sight?
God! 'tis her own daughter she espies!

XXII.

And the youth in terror sought to cover,
With her own light veil, the maiden's head,
Clasped her close; but, gliding from her lover,
Back the vestment from her brow she spread,
And her form upright,
As with ghostly might,
Long and slowly rises from the bed.

XXIII.

"Mother! mother! wherefore thus deprive me
Of such joy as I this night have known?
Wherefore from these warm embraces drive me?
Was I wakened up to meet thy frown?
Did it not suffice
That in virgin guise,
To an early grave you forced me down?

XXIV.

"Fearful is the weird that forced me hither,
From the dark-heaped chamber where I lay;
Powerless are your drowsy anthems, neither
Can your priests prevail, howe'er they pray.
Salt nor lymph can cool,
Where the pulse is full;
Love must still burn on, though wrapped in clay.

XXV.

"To this youth my early troth was plighted,
Whilst yet Venus ruled within the land;
Mother! and that vow ye falsely slighted,
At your new and gloomy faith's command.
But no god will hear,
If a mother swear
Pure from love to keep her daughter's hand.

XXVI.

"Nightly from my narrow chamber driven,
Come I to fulfil my destined part,
Him to seek to whom my troth was given,
And to draw the life-blood from his heart.
He hath served my will;
More I yet must kill,
For another prey I now depart.

XXVII.

"Fair young man! thy thread of life is broken,
Human skill can bring no aid to thee.
There thou hast my chain — a ghastly token —
And this lock of thine I take with me.
Soon must thou decay,
Soon thou wilt be gray,
Dark although to-night thy tresses be!

XXVIII.

"Mother! hear, oh, hear my last entreaty!
Let the funeral-pile arise once more;
Open up my wretched tomb for pity.
And in flames our souls to peace restore.
When the ashes glow,
When the fire-sparks flow,
To the ancient gods aloft we soar."

THE PUPIL IN MAGIC.

I AM now, — what joy to hear it! —
  Of the old magician rid;
And henceforth shall every spirit
  Do whate'er by me is bid;
      I have watched with rigor
        All he used to do,
      And will now with vigor
        Work my wonders too.

    Wander, wander
      Onward lightly,
      So that rightly
        Flow the torrent,
    And with teeming waters yonder
        In the bath discharge its current!

And now come, thou well-worn broom,
  And thy wretched form bestir;
Thou hast ever served as groom,
  So fulfil my pleasure, sir!
      On two legs now stand,
        With a head on top;
      Waterpail in hand,
        Haste, and do not stop!

    Wander, wander
      Onward lightly,
      So that rightly
        Flow the torrent,
    And with teeming waters yonder
        In the bath discharge its current!

See! he's running to the shore,
  And has now attained the pool,
And with lightning speed once more
  Comes here with his bucket full!
      Back he then repairs;
        See how swells the tide!
      How each pail he bears
        Straightway is supplied!

Stop, for, lo!
All the measure
Of thy treasure
Now is right! —
Ah, I see it! woe, oh, woe!
I forget the word of might.

Ah, the word whose sound can straight
Make him what he was before!
Ah, he runs with nimble gait!
Would thou wert a broom once more!
Streams renewed forever
Quickly bringeth he;
River after river
Rusheth on poor me.

Now no longer
Can I bear him;
I will snare him,
Knavish sprite!
Ah, my terror waxes stronger!
What a look! what fearful sight!

Oh, thou villain child of hell!
Shall the house through thee be drowned?
Floods I see that wildly swell,
O'er the threshold gaining ground.
Wilt thou not obey,
Oh, thou broom accursed?
Be thou still, I pray,
As thou wert at first!

Will enough
Never please thee?
I will seize thee,
Hold thee fast,
And thy nimble wood so tough,
With my sharp axe split at last.

See, once more he hastens back!
Now, oh, Cobold, thou shalt catch it!
I will rush upon his track;
Crashing on him falls my hatchet.

Bravely done, indeed!
See, he's cleft in twain!
Now from care I'm freed,
And can breathe again.

Woe, oh, woe!
Both the parts,
Quick as darts,
Stand on end,
Servants of my dreaded foe!
Oh, ye gods, protection send!

And they run! and wetter still
Grow the steps and grows the hall.
Lord and master, hear me call!
Ever seems the flood to fill,
Ah, he's coming! see,
Great is my dismay!
Spirits raised by me
Vainly would I lay!

"To the side
Of the room
Hasten, broom,
As of old!
Spirits I have ne'er untied
Save to act as they are told.

◆

BEFORE A COURT OF JUSTICE.

The father's name ye ne'er shall be told
Of my darling unborn life;
"Shame, shame," ye cry, "on the strumpet bold!"
Yet I am an honest wife.

To whom I'm wedded, ye ne'er shall be told,
Yet he's both loving and fair;
He wears on his neck a chain of gold,
And a hat of straw doth he wear.

If scorn 'tis vain to seek to repel,
On me let the scorn be thrown.
I know him well, and he knows me well,
And to God, too, all is known.

Sir Parson and Sir Bailiff, again,
I pray you, leave me in peace!
My child it is, my child 'twill remain,
So let your questionings cease!

◆

THE GOD AND THE BAYADERE.

AN INDIAN LEGEND.

[This very fine Ballad was also first given in the ***Horen***.]

Mahadeva,* Lord of earth,
For the sixth time comes below,
As a man of mortal birth,—
Like him, feeling joy and woe.
Hither loves he to repair,
And his power behind to leave;
If to punish or to spare,
Men as man he'd fain perceive.
And when he the town as a traveller hath seen,
Observing the mighty, regarding the mean,
He quits it, to go on his journey, at eve.

He was leaving now the place,
When an outcast met his eyes,—
Fair in form, with painted face,—
Where some straggling dwellings rise,
"Maiden, hail!"—"Thanks! welcome here!
"Stay!—I'll join thee in the road."—
"Who art thou?"—"A Bayadere,
And this house is love's abode."
The cymbal she hastens to play for the dance,
Well skilled in its mazes the sight to entrance,
Then by her with grace is the nosegay bestowed.

Then she draws him, as in play,
O'er the threshold eagerly:
"Beauteous stranger, light as day,
Thou shalt soon this cottage see.

---

* One of the numerous names of Seeva, the destroyer,—the great god of the Brahmins.

I'll refresh thee, if thou'rt tired,
And will bathe thy weary feet;
Take whate'er by thee's desired,
Toying, rest, or rapture sweet." —
She busily seeks his feigned suff'rings to ease;
Then smiles the Immortal; with pleasure he sees
That with kindness a heart so corrupted can beat.

And he makes her act the part
Of a slave; he's straight obeyed.
What at first had been but art,
Soon is nature in the maid.
By degrees the fruit we find,
Where the buds at first obtain;
When obedience fills the mind,
Love will never far remain.
But sharper and sharper the maiden to prove,
The Discerner of all things below and above,
Feigns pleasure, and horror, and maddening pain.

And her painted cheeks he kisses,
And his vows her heart enthral;
Feeling love's sharp pangs and blisses
Soon her tears begin to fall.
At his feet she now must sink,
Not with thoughts of lust or gain, —
And her slender members shrink
And devoid of power remain.
And so the bright hours with gladness prepare
Their dark, pleasing veil of a texture so fair,
And over the couch softly, tranquilly reign.

Late she falls asleep, thus blessed, —
Early wakes, her slumbers fled,
And she finds the much-loved guest
On her bosom lying dead.
Screaming falls she on him there,
But, alas, too late to save!
And his rigid limbs they bear
Straightway to their fiery grave,
Then hears she the priests and the funeral song,
Then madly she runs, and she severs the throng:
"Why press tow'rd the pile thus? Why scream thus and rave?"

Then she sinks beside his bier,
And her screams through air resound:
"I must seek my spouse so dear,
E'en if in the grave he's bound.
Shall those limbs of grace divine
Fall to ashes in my sight?
Mine he was! Yes, only mine!
Ah, one single blissful night!"
The priests chant in chorus: "We bear out the old,
When long they've been weary, and late they've grown cold;
We bear out the young, too, so thoughtless and light

"To thy priests' command give ear!
This one was thy husband ne'er;
Live still as a Bayadere,
And no duty thou need'st share.
To death's silent realms from life,
None but shades attend man's frame,
With the husband, none but wife,—
That is duty, that is fame.
Ye trumpets, your sacred lament haste to raise!
Oh, welcome, ye gods, the bright lustre of days!
Oh, welcome to heaven the youth from the flame!"

Thus increased her torments are
By the cruel, heartless choir;
And with arms outstretching far
Leaps she on the glowing pyre.
But the youth divine outsprings
From the flame with heav'nly grace,
And on high his flight he wings,
While his arms his love embrace.
In the sinner repentant the Godhead feels joy;
Immortals delight thus their might to employ
Lost children to raise to a heavenly place.

THE PARIAH.

I. THE PARIAH'S PRAYER.

DREADED Brama, lord of might!
All proceed from thee alone;
Thou art he who judgeth right!
Dost thou none but Brahmins own?

Do but Rajahs come from thee?
None but those of high estate?
Didst not thou the ape create,
Ay, and even such as we?

We are not of noble kind,
For with woe our lot is rife;
And what others deadly find
Is our only source of life.
Let this be enough for men,
Let them, if they will, despise us;
But thou, Brama, thou shouldst prize us,
All are equal in thy ken.

Now that, Lord, this prayer is said,
As thy child acknowledge me;
Or let one be born instead,
Who may link me on to thee!
Diast not thou a Bayadere
As a goddess heavenward raise?
And we, too, to swell thy praise,
Such a miracle would hear.

II. LEGEND.

[The successful manner in which Goethe employs the simple rhymeless trochaic metre in this and in many other Poems will perhaps be remarked by the reader.]

Water-fetching goes the noble
Brahmin's wife, so pure and lovely;
He is honored, void of blemish,
And of justice rigid, stern.
Daily from the sacred river
Brings she back refreshment precious,—
But where is the pail and pitcher?
She of neither stands in need.
For with pure heart, hands unsullied,
She the water lifts, and rolls it
To a wondrous ball of crystal;
This she bears with gladsome bosom,
Modestly, with graceful motion.
To her husband in the house.

She to-day at dawn of morning
Praying comes to Ganges' waters,
Bends her o'er the glassy surface —
Sudden, in the waves reflected,
Flying swiftly far above her,
From the highest heavens descending,
She discerns the beauteous form
Of a youth divine, created
By the God's primeval wisdom
In his own eternal breast.
When she sees him, straightway feels she
Wondrous, new, confused sensations
In her inmost, deepest being;
Fain she'd linger o'er the vision,
Then repels it, — it returneth, —
And, perplexed, she bends her flood-wards
With uncertain hands to draw it;
But, alas, she draws no more!
For the water's sacred billows
Seem to fly, to hasten from her;
She but sees the fearful chasm
Of a whirlpool black disclosed.

Arms drop down, and footsteps stumble,
Can this be the pathway homewards?
Shall she fly, or shall she tarry?
Can she think, when thought and counsel,
When assistance, all are lost?
So before her spouse appears she —
On her looks he — look is judgment —
Proudly on the sword he seizes,
To the hill of death he drags her,
Where delinquents' blood pays forfeit.
What resistance could she offer?
What excuses could she proffer,
Guilty, knowing not her guilt?

And with bloody sword returns he,
Musing, to his silent dwelling,
When his son before him stands:
"Whose this blood? Oh, father! father!"
"The delinquent woman's!" — "Never!
For upon the sword it dries not,

Like the blood of the delinquent;
Fresh it flows, as from the wound.
Mother! mother! hither hasten;
Unjust never was my father,
Tell me what he now hath done."—
"Silence; silence! *hers* the blood is!"
"Whose, my father?"—"Silence! Silence!"
"What! oh, what! my mother's blood!
What her crime? What did she? Answer!
Now, the sword! the sword now hold I!
Thou thy wife perchance might'st slaughter
But my mother might'st not slay!
Through the flames the wife is able
Her belovèd spouse to follow,
And his dear and only mother
Through the sword her faithful son."
"Stay! oh, stay!" exclaimed the father:
"Yet 'tis time, so hasten, hasten!
Join the head upon the body,
With the sword then touch the figure,
And, alive, she'll follow thee."

Hastening, he, with breathless wonder,
Sees the bodies of two women
Lying crosswise; and their heads, too;
Oh, what horror! which to choose!
Then his mother's head he seizes,—
Does not kiss it, deadly pale 'tis,—
On the nearest headless body
Puts it quickly, and then blesses
With the sword the pious work.
Then a giant form uprises.—
From the dear lips of his mother,
Lips all godlike—changeless—blissful,
Sound these words with horror fraught;
"Son, oh, son! what overhastening!
Yonder is thy mother's body,
Near it lies the impious head
Of the woman who hath fallen
Victim to the judgment-sword!
To her body I am grafted
By thy hand for endless ages;

Wise in counsel, wild in action,
I shall be amongst the gods.
E'en the heavenly boy's own image,
Though in brow and eye so lovely,
Sinking downwards to the bosom
Mad and raging lust will stir.

"'Twill return again for ever,
Ever rising, ever sinking,
Now obscured, and now transfigured,—
So great Brama hath ordained.
He 'twas sent the beauteous pinions,
Radiant face, and slender members
Of the only God-begotten,
That I might be proved and tempted;
For from high descends temptation,
When the gods ordain it so.
And so I, the Brahmin woman,
With my head in Heaven reclining,
Must experience, as a Pariah,
The debasing power of earth.

"Son, I send thee to thy father!
Comfort him! Let no sad penance,
Weak delay, or thought of merit,
Hold thee in the desert fast;
Wander on through ev'ry nation,
Roam abroad throughout all ages,
And proclaim to e'en the meanest,
That great Brama hears his cry!

"None is in his eyes the meanest—
He whose limbs are lame and palsied,
He whose soul is wildly riven,
Worn with sorrow, hopeless, helpless,
Be he Brahmin, be he Pariah,
If tow'rd heaven he turns his gaze,
Will perceive, will learn to know it:
Thousand eyes are glowing yonder,
Thousand ears are calmly list'ning,

From which naught below is hid,
"If I to his throne soar upward,
If he sees my fearful figure

By his might transformed to horror,
He forever will lament it, —
May it to your good be found!
And I now will kindly warn him,
And I now will madly tell him
Whatsoe'er my mind conceiveth,
What within my bosom heaveth.
But my thoughts, my inmost feelings —
Those a secret shall remain."

III. THE PARIAH'S THANKS.

Mighty Brama, now I'll bless thee!
  'Tis from thee that worlds proceed!
As my ruler I confess thee,
  For of all thou takest heed.

All thy thousand ears thou keepest
  Open to each child of earth;
We, 'mongst mortals sunk the deepest,
  Have from thee received new birth.

Bear in mind the woman's story,
  Who, through grief, divine became;
Now I'll wait to view His glory,
  Who omnipotence can claim.

◆

DEATH LAMENT OF THE NOBLE WIFE OF ASAN AGA.

[This beautiful poem, purporting to be a translation from the Morlachian, was first printed in Herder's admirable collection of ballads, translated into German from almost every European language, and published under the title of Volkslieder. The fine poetic instinct of Goethe was signally displayed in this composition; for although, as Mickiewicz has observed (*Les Slaves*, tome i, p. 323, Paris, 1849), he had to divine the import of the poem across three bad translations, and was at the same time ignorant of the Slavic language, he produced a perfect version, having instinctively detected and avoided the faults of the previous translators.]

What is yon so white beside the greenwood?
Is it snow, or flight of cygnets resting?
Were it snow, ere now it had been melted;
Were it swans, ere now the flock had left us.
Neither snow nor swans are resting yonder,
'Tis the glittering tents of Asan Aga.
Faint he lies from wounds in stormy battle;
There his mother and his sisters seek him,
But his wife hangs back for shame, and comes not.

When the anguish of his hurts was over,
To his faithful wife he sent this message —
"Longer 'neath my roof thou shalt not tarry,
Neither in my court nor in my household."

When the lady heard that cruel sentence,
'Reft of sense she stood, and racked with anguish;
In the court she heard the horses stamping,
And in fear that it was Asan coming,
Fled towards the tower, to leap and perish.

Then in terror ran her little daughters,
Calling after her, and weeping sorely,
"These are not the steeds of Father Asan;
Tis our Uncle Pintorovich coming!"

And the wife of Asan turned to meet him;
Sobbing, threw her arms around her brother.
"See the wrongs, O brother, of thy sister!
These five babes I bore and must I leave them?"

Silently the brother, from his girdle,
Draws the ready deed of separation,
Wrapped within a crimson silken cover.
She is free to seek her mother's dwelling —
Free to join in wedlock with another.

When the woeful lady saw the writing,
Kissed she both her boys upon the forehead,
Kissed on both the cheeks her sobbing daughters;
But she cannot tear herself for pity
From the infant smiling in the cradle!

Rudely did her brother tear her from it,
Deftly lifted her upon a courser,
And in haste towards his father's dwelling,
Spurred he onward with the woeful lady.

Short the space; seven days, but barely seven —
Little space I ween — by many nobles
Was the lady — still in weeds of mourning —
Was the lady courted in espousal.

Far the noblest was Imoski's cadi;
And the dame in tears besought her brother —
"I adjure thee, by the life thou bearest,

Give me not a second time in marriage,
That my heart may not be rent asunder
If again I see my darling children!"

Little recked the brother of her bidding,
Fixed to wed her to Imoski's cadi.
But the gentle lady still entreats him —
Send at least a letter, O my brother!
To Imoski's cadi, thus imploring —
I, the youthful widow, greet thee fairly,
And entreat thee by this self-same token,
When thou comest hither with thy bridesmen,
Bring a heavy veil, that I may shroud me
As we pass along by Asan's dwelling,
So I may not see my darling orphans."

Scarcely had the cadi read the letter,
When he called together all his bridesmen;
Bound to bring the lady homewards,
And he brought the veil as she entreated.

Jocundly they reached the princely mansion,
Jocundly they bore her thence in triumph;
But, when they drew near to Asan's dwelling,
Then the children recognized their mother,
And they cried, "Come back unto the chamber —
Share the meal this evening with thy children!"
Then she turned her to the lordly bridegroom —
"Pray thee, let the bridesmen and their horses
Halt a little by the once-loved dwelling,
Till I give these presents to my children."

And they halted by the once-loved dwelling,
And she gave the weeping children presents,
Gave each boy a cap with gold embroidered,
Gave each girl a gay and costly garment,
And with tears she left a tiny mantle
For the helpless baby in the cradle.

These things marked the father, Asan Aga,
And in sorrow called he to his children —
"Turn again to me, ye poor deserted;
Hard as steel is now your mother's bosom;
Shut so fast it cannot throb with pity!"

Thus he spoke; and when the lady heard him,
Pale as death she dropped upon the pavement
And the life fled from her wretched bosom,
As she saw her children turning from her.

◆

IDYLL.

A village Chorus is supposed to be assembled, and about to commence its festive procession.

Written for the birthday of the Duchess Louisa of Weimar.]

CHORUS.

THE festal day hail ye
With garlands of pleasure,
And dances' soft measure,
With rapture commingled
And sweet choral song.

DAMON.

Oh, how I yearn from out the crowd to flee!
What joy a secret glade would give to me!
Amid the throng, the turmoil here,
Confined the plain, the breezes e'en appear.

CHORUS.

Now order it truly,
That ev'ry one duly
May roam and may wander.
Now here and now yonder,
The meadows along.

[The Chorus retreats gradually, and the song becomes fainter and fainter, till it dies away in the distance.]

DAMON.

In vain ye call, in vain would lure me on;
True my heart speaks, but with itself alone.
And if I may view
A blessing-fraught land,
The heaven's clear blue,
And the plain's verdant hue,
Alone I'll rejoice,
Undisturbed by man's voice.

And there I'll pay homage
To womanly merit,
Observe it in spirit,
In spirit pay homage;
To echo alone
Shall my secret be known.

CHORUS.

[Faintly mingling with Damon's song in the distance.]

To echo — alone —
Shall my secret — be known.

MENALCAS.

My friend, why meet I here with thee?
Thou hastenest not to join the festal throng?
No longer stay, but come with me,
And mingle in the dance and song.

DAMON.

Thou'rt welcome, friend! but suffer me to roam
Where these old beeches hide me from man's view;
Love seeks in solitude a home,
And homage may retreat there, too.

MENALCAS.

Thou seekest here a spurious fame,
And hast a mind to-day to grieve me.
Love as thy portion thou may'st claim,
But homage thou must share with *all*, believe me!

When their voices thousands raise,
And the dawn of morning praise,
Rapture bringing,
Blithely singing
On before us,
Heart and ear in pleasure vie;

And when thousands join in chorus,
With feelings brightly glowing,
And the wishes overflowing,
Forcibly they'll bear thee high.

[The Chorus gradually approaches from the distance.]

DAMON.

Distant strains are hither wending,
And I'm gladdened by the throng;
Yes, they're coming, — yes, descending
To the valley from the height.

MENALCAS.

Let us haste, our footsteps blending
With the rhythm of the song!
Yes, they come; their course they're bending
Toward the wood's green sward so bright.

CHORUS.

[Gradually becoming louder.]

Yes, we hither come, attending
With the harmony of song,
As the hours their race are ending
On this day of blest delight.

ALL.

Let none reveal
The thoughts we feel,
The aims we own!
Let joy alone
Disclose the story!
She'll prove it right
And her delight
Includes the glory,
Includes the bliss
Of days like this!

◆

RINALDO.*

[This Cantata was written for Prince Frederick of Gotha, and set to music by Winter, the Prince singing the part of Rinaldo. — See the *Annalen.*]

CHORUS.

To the strand! quick, mount the bark!
If no favoring breezes blow,
Ply the oar and nimbly row,
And with zeal your prowess mark!
O'er the sea we thus career.

---

* See TASSO'S *Gerusalemme Liberata*, Canto XVI.

RINALDO.

Oh, let me linger one short moment here!
'Tis heaven's decree, I may not hence away.
The rugged cliffs, the wood-encircled bay,
Hold me a prisoner, and my flight delay.
Ye were so fair, but now that dream is o'er;
The charms of earth, the charms of heaven are naught
What keeps me in this spot so terror-fraught?
My only joy is fled from me forevermore.

Let me taste those days so sweet,
Heaven descended, once again!
Heart, dear heart! ay, warmly beat!
Spirit true, recall those days!
Freeborn breath, thy gentle lays
Mingled are with joy and pain.

Round the beds so richly gleaming,
Rises up a palace fair;
And with rosy fragrance teeming,
As in dream thou saw'st it ne'er.

And this spacious garden round,
Far extend the galleries;
Roses blossom near the ground,
High in air, too, bloom the trees.

Wat'ry flakes and jets are falling,
Sweet and silv'ry strains arise;
While the turtle-dove is calling,
And the nightingale replies.

CHORUS.

Gently come! feel no alarm,
On a noble duty bent;
Vanished now is ev'ry charm
That by magic power was lent.
Friendly words and greetings calm
On his wounds will pour soft balm,
Fill his mind with sweet content.

RINALDO.

Hark! the turtle-dove is calling,
And the nightingale replies;
Wat'ry flakes and jets are falling,
Mingling with their melodies.

But all of them say:
  Her only we mean;
But all fly away,
  As soon as she's seen,—
The beauteous young maiden,
  With graces so rife.

Then lily and rose
  In wreaths are entwining:
  In dances combining,
Each zephyr that blows
  Its brother is greeting,
  All flying and meeting
With balsam full laden,
  When wakened to life.

CHORUS.
No! no longer may we wait;
Rouse him from his vision straight!
Show the adamantine shield!

RINALDO.
Woe! what form is here revealed!

CHORUS.
'Twill disclose the cheat to thee.

RINALDO.
Am I doomed myself to see
Thus degraded evermore?

CHORUS.
Courage take, and all is o'er.

RINALDO.
Be it so! I'll take fresh heart,
From the spot beloved depart,
Leave Armida once again.—
Come then! here no more remain!

CHORUS.
Yes, 'tis well no more remain.

SEMI-CHORUS.

Away then! let's fly
  O'er the zephyr-kissed ocean
The soul-lighted eye
  Sees armies in motion,
See proud banners wave
  O'er the dust-sprinkled course

CHORUS.

From his forefathers brave
  Draws the hero new force.

RINALDO.

With sorrow laden,
  Within this valley's
  All-silent alleys
The fairest maiden
  Again I see.
  Twice can this be?
What! shall I hear it,
And not have spirit
To ease her pains?

CHORUS.

Unworthy chains?

RINALDO.

And now I've seen he
  Alas! how changed!
With cold demeanor,
  And looks estranged,
With ghostly tread, —
All hope is fled,
Yes, fled forever.
The lightnings quiver,
Each palace falls;
The godlike halls,
Each joyous hour
Of spirit-power,
With love's sweet day
All fade away!

CHORUS.

Yes, fade away!

SEMI-CHORUS.

Already are heard
The prayers of the pious.
Why longer deny us?
The favoring zephyr
Forbids all delay.

CHORUS.

Away, then! away!

RINALDO.

With heart sadly stirred,
Your command I receive;
Ye force me to leave.
Unkind is the zephyr, —
Oh, wherefore not stay?

CHORUS.

Away, then! away!

THE FIRST WALPURGIS-NIGHT.

A DRUID.

Sweet smiles the May!
The forest gay
From frost and ice is freed;
No snow is found,
Glad songs resound
Across the verdant mead.
Upon the height
The snow lies light,
Yet thither now we go,
There to extol our Father's name,
Whom we for ages know.
Amid the smoke shall gleam the flame;
Thus pure the heart will grow.

THE DRUIDS.

Amid the smoke shall gleam the flame;
Extol we now our Father's name,
Whom we for ages know!
Up, up, then, let us go!

ONE OF THE PEOPLE.

Would ye, then, so rashly act?
Would ye instant death attract?
Know ye not the cruel threats
  Of the victors we obey?
Round about are placed their nets
  In the sinful heathen's way.
Ah! upon the lofty wall
  Wife and children slaughter they;
And we all
Hasten to a certain fall.

CHORUS OF WOMEN.

Ay, upon the camp's high wall
  All our children loved they slay.
  Ah, what cruel victors they!
And we all
Hasten to a certain fall.

A DRUID

  Who fears to-day
  His rites to pay,
Deserves his chains to wear.
  The forest's free!
  This wood take we,
And straight a pile prepare!
  Yet in the wood
  To stay 'tis good
By day till all is still,
With watchers all around us placed
  Protecting you from ill.
With courage fresh, then, let us haste
  Our duties to fulfil.

CHORUS OF WATCHERS.

Ye valiant watchers now divide
Your numbers through the forest wide,
  And see that all is still,
  While they their rites fulfil.

A WATCHER.

Let us in a cunning wise,
Yon dull Christian priests surprise!
With the devil of their talk
  We'll those very priests confound.

Come with prong and come with fork,
   Raise a wild and rattling sound
Through the livelong night, and prowl
   All the rocky passes round.
Screech-owl, owl,
Join in chorus with our howl!

CHORUS OF WATCHERS.

Come with prong, and come with fork,
Like the devil of their talk,
And with wildly rattling sound,
Prowl the desert rocks around!
Screech-owl, owl,
Join in chorus with our howl!

A DRUID.

      Thus far 'tis right,
      That we by night
   Our Father's praises sing;
      Yet when 'tis day,
      To Thee we may
   A heart unsullied bring.
      'Tis true that now,
      And often, Thou
   Favorest the foe in fight.
As from the smoke is freed the blaze,
   So let our faith burn bright!
And if they crush our olden ways,
   Who e'er can crush Thy light?

A CHRISTIAN WATCHER.

Comrades, quick! your aid afford!
All the brood of hell's abroad:
See how their enchanted forms
   Through and through with flames are glowing!
Dragon-women, men-wolf swarms,
   On in quick succession going!
Let us, let us haste to fly!
   Wilder yet the sounds are growing,
And the arch fiend roars on high;
From the ground
Hellish vapors rise around.

CHORUS OF CHRISTIAN WATCHERS.

Terrible enchanted forms,
Dragon-women, men-wolf swarms!
Wilder yet the sounds are growing!
See, the arch fiend comes, all-glowing!
From the ground
Hellish vapors rise around.

CHORUS OF DRUIDS.

As from the smoke is freed the blaze,
  So let our faith burn bright!
And if they crush our olden ways,
  Whoe'er can crush Thy light?

◆

THE following Odes are the most singular of all the Poems of Goethe, and to many will appear so wild and fantastic as to leave anything but a pleasing impression. Those at the beginning, addressed to his friend Behrisch, were written at the age of eighteen, and most of the remainder were composed while he was still quite young. Despite, however, the extravagance of some of them, such as the *Winter Journey over the Hartz Mountain* and the *Wanderer's Storm-Song*, nothing can be finer than the noble one entitled *Mahomet's Song*, and others, such as the *Spirit Song over the Waters*, *The Godlike*, and, above all, the magnificent sketch of *Prometheus*, which forms part of an unfinished piece bearing the same name, and called by Goethe a "Dramatic Fragment."

TO MY FRIEND.

[These three Odes are addressed to a certain Behrisch, who was tutor to Count Linedenan, and of whom Goethe gives an odd account at the end of the Seventh Book of his *Autobiography*.]

FIRST ODE.

TRANSPLANT the beauteous tree!
Gardener, it gives me pain;
A happier resting-place
Its trunk deserved.

Yet the strength of its nature
To Earth's exhausting avarice,
To Air's destructive inroads.
An antidote opposed.

See how it in spring time
Coins its pale green leaves!
Their orange-fragrance
Poisons each fly-blow straight.

The caterpillar's tooth
Is blunted by them;
With silvery hues they gleam
In the bright sunshine.

Its twigs the maiden
Fain would twine in
Her bridal-garland;
Youth its fruit are seeking.

See, the autumn cometh!
The caterpillar
Sighs to the crafty spider,—
Sighs that the tree will not fade.

Hov'ring thither,
From out her yew-tree dwelling,
The gaudy foe advances
Against the kindly tree,

And cannot hurt it.
But the more artful one
Defiles with nauseous venom
Its silver leaves;

And sees with triumph
How the maiden shudders,
The youth, how mourns he,
On passing by.

Transplant the beauteous tree!
Gardener, it gives me pain
Tree, thank the gardener
Who moves thee hence!

SECOND ODE.

Thou goest! I murmur—
Go! let me murmur.
Oh, worthy man,
Fly from this land!

Deadly marshes,
Steaming mists of October
Here interweave their currents,
Blending forever.

Noisome insects
Here are engendered;
Fatal darkness
Veils their malice.

The fiery-tongued serpent,
Hard by the sedgy bank,
Stretches his pampered body,
Caressed by the sun's bright beams.

Tempt no gentle night-rambles
Under the moon's cold twilight!
Loathsome toads hold their meetings
Yonder at every crossway.

Injuring not,
Fear will they cause thee.
Oh, worthy man,
Fly from this land!

THIRD ODE.

Be void of feeling!
A heart that soon is stirred,
Is a possession sad
Upon this changing earth.

Behrisch, let spring's sweet smile
Never gladden thy brow!
Then winter's gloomy tempests
Never will shadow it o'er.

Lean thyself ne'er on a maiden's
Sorrow-engendering breast.
Ne'er on the arm,
Misery-fraught, of a friend.

Already Envy
From out his rocky ambush
Upon thee turns
The force of his lynx-like eyes,

Stretches his talons,
On thee falls,
In thy shoulders
Cunningly plants them.

Strong are his skinny arms,
As panther-claws;
He shaketh thee,
And rends thy frame.

Death 'tis to part;
'Tis threefold death
To part, not hoping
Ever to meet again.

Thou wouldst rejoice to leave
This hated land behind,
Wert thou not chained to me
With friendship's flowery chains.

Burst them! I'll not repine.
No noble friend
Would stay his fellow-captive
If means of flight appear.

The remembrance
Of his dear friend's freedom
Gives *him* freedom
In his dungeon.

Thou goest, — I'm left.
But e'en already
The last year's wingèd spokes
Whirl round the smoken axle.

I number the turns
Of the thundering wheel;
The last one I bless, —
Each bar then is broken, I'm free then as thou!

◆

SONG OF THE SPIRITS OVER THE WATERS.

THE soul of man is like to water;
    From Heaven it cometh,
    To Heaven it riseth,
And then returneth to earth,
    Forever alternating.

Then foameth brightly,
In cloud-waves rolling,
O'er polished rocks.
Then tranquil flowing,
It wandereth, hiding,
Soft murmuring to depths below it.
Over scrags from the steep projecting
Falls it all roaring, foaming, step-like,
Far downward.
Then, level flowing,
Creeps to the meadow away:
And in the glassy sea
Gaze all the planets at their fair faces.

Wind is to wavelet tenderest lover:
Wind from the deep tears foam-crested billows.
Soul of man mortal, how art thou like water!
Fate of man mortal, how art thou like wind!

◆

MAHOMET'S SONG.

[This song was intended to be introduced in a dramatic poem entitled *Mahomet*, the plan of which was not carried out by Goethe. He mentions that it was to have been sung by Ali towards the end of the piece, in honor of his master, Mahomet, shortly before his death, and when at the height of his glory, of which it is typical.]

See the rock-born stream!
Like the gleam
Of a star so bright!
Kindly spirits
High above the clouds
Nourished him while youthful
In the copse between the cliffs.

Young and fresh,
From the clouds he danceth
Down upon the marble rocks;
Then toward heaven
Leaps exulting.

Through the mountain-passes
Chaseth he the colored pebbles,
And, advancing like a chief,
Tears his brother streamlets with him
In his course.

In the valley down below
'Neath his footsteps spring the flowers,
And the meadow
In his breath finds life.

Yet no shady vale can stay him,
Nor can flowers,
Round his knees all softly twining
With their loving eyes detain him;
To the plain his course he taketh,
Serpent-winding.

Social streamlets
Join his waters. And now moves he
O'er the plain in silv'ry glory,
And the plain in him exults,
And the rivers from the plain,
And the streamlets from the mountain,
Shout with joy, exclaiming: "Brother,
Brother, take thy brethren with thee,
With thee to thine aged father,
To the everlasting ocean,
Who, with arms outstretching far,
Waiteth for us;
Ah, in vain those arms lie open
To embrace his yearning children;
For the thirsty sand consumes us
In the desert waste; the sunbeams
Drink our life-blood; hills around us
Into lakes would dam us! Brother,
Take thy brethren of the plain,
Take thy brethren of the mountain
With thee, to thy father's arms!"

Let all come, then! —
And now swells he
Lordlier still; yea, e'en a people
Bears his regal flood on high!
And in triumph onward rolling,
Names to countries gives he, — cities
Spring to light beneath his foot.

Ever, ever, on he rushes,
Leaves the towers' flame-tipped summits,
Marble palaces, the offspring
Of his fulness, far behind.

Cedar-houses bears the Atlas
On his giant shoulders; fluttering
In the breeze far, far above him
Thousand flags are gaily floating,
Bearing witness to his might.

And so beareth he his brethren,
All his treasures, all his children.
Wildly shouting, to the bosom
Of his long-expectant sire.

◆

MY GODDESS.

Say, which Immortal
Merits the highest reward?
With none contend I,
But I will give it
To the ay-changing,
Ever-moving
Wondrous daughter of Jove,
His best-beloved offspring,
Sweet Phantasy.

For unto her
Hath he granted
All the fancies which erst
To none allowed he
Saving himself;
Now he takes his pleasure
In the mad one.

She may, crowned with roses,
With staff twined round with lilies
Roam through flowery valleys
Rule the butterfly people,
And soft-nourishing dew
With bee-like lips
Drink from the blossom:

Or else she may,
With fluttering hair
And gloomy looks,
Sigh in the wind
Round rocky cliffs,
And thousand-hued,
Like morn and even,
Ever changing,
Like moonbeam's light,
To mortals appear.

Let us all, then,
Adore the Father!
The old, the mighty,
Who such a beauteous
Ne'er-fading spouse
Deigns to accord
To perishing mortals!

To us alone
Doth he unite her,
With heavenly bonds,
While he commands her
In joy and sorrow,
As a true spouse
Never try to fly us.

All the remaining
Races so poor
Of life-teeming earth,
In children so rich,
Wander and feed
In vacant enjoyment,
And 'mid the dark sorrows
Of evanescent
Restricted life, —
Bowed by the heavy
Yoke of Necessity

But unto us he
Hath his most versatile,
Most cherished daughter
Granted, — what joy!

Lovingly greet her
As a beloved one!
Give her the woman's
Place in our home!

And, oh, may the aged
Stepmother Wisdom
Her gentle spirit
Ne'er seek to harm?

Yet know I her sister,
The older, sedater,
Mine own silent friend;
Oh, may she never,
Till life's lamp is quenched,
Turn away from me,—
That noble inciter,
Comforter,—Hope!

◆

HARTZ MOUNTAINS.

RIDE TO THE HARTZ IN WINTER.

[The following explanation is necessary in order to make this ode in any way intelligible. The Poet is supposed to leave his companions, who are proceeding on a hunting expedition in winter, in order himself to pay a visit to a hypochondriacal friend, and also to see the mining in the Hartz mountains. The ode alternately describes, in a very fragmentary and peculiar way, the naturally happy disposition of the Poet himself and the unhappiness of his friend; it pictures the wildness of the road and the dreariness of the prospect, which is relieved at one spot by the distant sight of a town, a very vague allusion to which is made in the third strophe; it recalls the hunting party on which his companions have gone: and, after an address to Love, concludes by a contrast between unexplored recesses of the highest peak of the Hartz and the metalliferous veins of its smaller brethren.]

Free as the hawk,
Which, on yon dark morning cloud-pile,
With soft spread pinion resting,
Looks out for prey,
Float my loose song!

Sure a God hath
Unto each his path
Fore-appointed,
Which the fortunate
Swift to happiest
Goal pursues:

But whom misfortune
Hath frozen to the heart,
He frets him vainly
Against the restraint of
The wire-woven cord, which
Soon shall the bitter scissors
Snap once for all.

To gloomy thicket
Rushes the reindeer wild,
And with the sparrows have
Long ago the rich folks
Into their swamps for shelter sunk.
Easy to follow the chariot,
When 'tis Fortune drives.
Just as the lumbering cart
Over the hard, smooth road rolls,
After a monarch's march.

But aside who fareth ?
In the woods he loses his path;
Swiftly behind him
The boughs fly together,
The grass stands up again,
The desert o'erwhelms him.

Ah, but who healeth the pangs of
Him, whose balm becomes poison?
Who but hate for man
From the fulness of love hath drunk?
First despised, and now a despiser,
Wastes he secretly
All his own best worth,
Brooding over himself.

Is there on thy psalter,
Father of love, one tone
Which his ear would welcome?
O, then, quicken his heart!
Open his beclouded look
Over the thousand fountains
All around him thirsting there
In the desert.

Thou, who on each bestowest
Joys, a superabundant share,
Bless the brothers of the chase,
Out in search of wild beasts,
With danger-loving zeal of youth,
Eager to take life,
Late avengers of mischief,
Which for years hath defied the
Farmer's threatening cudgel.

But the lone wanderer wrap
In thy golden cloud-fleeces;
And wreathe with evergreen,
Till the summer roses be blowing,
The dripping ringlets,
O Love, of this thy poet!

With thy flickering torch thou
Lightest him on
Through the fords, in the night,
Over treacherous footing
On desolate commons.
With the thousand tints of the moon, thou
Smilest to his heart so!
With the bitter cold blast
Bearest him gloriously up.
Winter torrents down from the rocks roll
Into his anthems.
An altar of cheerfulest thanks
Seems to him the terrible summit's
Snow-hung, hoary crown,
Wreathed with rows of pale spirits
By the marvellous people.

Thou standest, with unexplored bosom
Mysteriously prominent,
Over the astonished world,
And lookest from the clouds there
Down on its riches and majesty,
Which thou from the veins of these thy brothers
Round thee here waterest.

THE WANDERER'S STORM-SONG.

[Goethe says of this ode, that it is the only one remaining out of several strange hymns and dithyrambs composed by him at a period of great unhappiness, when the love-affair between him and Frederica had been broken off by him. He used to sing them while wandering wildly about the country. This particular one was caused by his being caught in a tremendous storm on one of these occasions. He calls it a half-crazy piece (*haybunsinn*), and the reader will probably agree with him.]

He whom thou ne'er leavest, Genius,
Feels no dread within his heart
At the tempest or the rain.
He whom thou ne'er leavest, Genius,
Will to the rain clouds,
Will to the hail-storm,
Sing in reply
As the lark sings,
O thou on high!

Him whom thou ne'er leavest, Genius,
Thou wilt raise above the mud-track
With thy fiery pinions.
He will wander,
As, with flowery feet,
Over Deucalion's dark flood,
Python-slaying, light, glorious,
Pythius Apollo.

Him whom thou ne'er leavest, Genius,
Thou wilt place upon thy fleecy pinion,
When he sleepeth on the rock, —
Thou wilt shelter with thy guardian wing
In the forest's midnight hour.

Him whom thou ne'er leavest, Genius,
Thou wilt wrap up warmly
In the snowdrift;
Toward the warmth approach the Muses,
Toward the warmth approach the Graces

Ye Muses, hover round me!
Ye Graces also!
That is water, that is earth,
And the son of water and of earth
Over which I wander.
Like the gods.

Ye are pure, like the heart of the water,
Ye are pure like the marrow of earth,
Hov'ring round me, while I hover
Over water, o'er the earth,
Like the gods.

Shall he, then, return,
The small, the dark, the fiery peasant?
Shall he, then, return, awaiting
Only thy gifts, O Father Bromius,
And brightly gleaming, warm the spreading fire?
Return with joy?
And I, whom ye attended,
Ye Muses and ye Graces,
Whom all awaits that ye,
Ye Muses and ye Graces,
Of circling bliss in life
Have glorified — shall I
Return dejected?

Father Bromius!
Thou art the Genius,
Genius of ages,
Thou'rt what inward glow
To Pindar was,
What to the world
Phœbus Apollo.

Woe! Woe! Inward warmth,
Spirit-warmth,
Central-point!
Glow, and vie with
Phœbus Apollo:
Coldly soon
His regal look
Over thee will swiftly glide, —
Envy-struck
Linger o'er the cedar's strength,
Which, to flourish,
Waits him not.

Why doth my lay name thee the last?
Thee, from whom it began,

Thee, in whom it endeth,
Thee, from whom it flows,
Jupiter Pluvius!
Toward thee streams my song
And a Castalian spring
Runs as a fellow-brook,
Runs to the idle ones,
Mortal, happy ones,
Apart from thee,
Who coverest me around,
Jupiter Pluvius!

Not by the elm-tree
Him didst thou visit,
With the pair of doves
Held in his gentle arm, —
With the beauteous garland of roses, —
Caressing him, so blest in his flowers,
Anacreon,
Storm-breathing godhead!
Not in the poplar grove,
Near the Sybaris' strand,
Not in the mountain's
Sun-illumined brow
Didst thou seize him,
The flower-singing,
Honey-breathing,
Sweetly nodding
Theocritus.

When the wheels were rattling,
Wheel on wheel toward the goal,
High arose
The sound of the lash
Of youth with victory glowing,
In the dust rolling,
As from the mountain fall
Showers of stone in the vale —
Then thy soul was brightly glowing, Pindar —
Glowing? Poor heart?
There, on the hill, —

Heavenly might!
But enough glow
Thither to wend,
Where is my cot!

◆

TO FATHER* KRONOS.

[Written in a post-chaise.]

Hasten thee, Kronos!
On with clattering trot!
Down hill goeth thy path;
Loathsome dizziness ever,
When thou delayest, assails me.
Quick, rattle along,
Over stock and stone let thy trot
Into life straightway lead!

Now once more
Up the toilsome ascent
Hasten, panting for breath!
Up, then, nor idle be, —
Striving and hoping, up, up!

Wide, high, glorious the view
Gazing round upon life,
While from mount unto mount
Hovers the spirit eterne,
Life eternal foreboding.

Sideways a roof's pleasant shade
Attracts thee,
And a look that promises coolness
On the maidenly threshold.
There refresh thee! And, maiden,
Give me this foaming draught also,
Give me this health-laden look!

Down, now! quicker still, down!
See where the sun sets!
Ere he sets, ere old age
Seize me in the morass,

---

*In the original, *Schwager*, which has the twofold meaning of *brother-in-law* and *postilion.*

Ere my toothless jaws mumble,
And my useless limbs totter;
While drunk with his farewell beam
Hurl me, — a fiery sea
Foaming still in mine eye, —
Hurl me, while dazzled and reeling,
Down to the gloomy portal of hell.

Blow, then, gossip, thy horn,
Speed on with echoing trot,
So that Orcus may know we are coming,
So that our host may with joy
Wait at the door to receive us.

◆

THE SEA-VOYAGE.

Many a day and night my bark stood ready laden;
Waiting fav'ring winds, I sat with true friends round me,
Pledging me to patience and to courage,
In the haven.

And they spoke thus with impatience twofold:
"Gladly pray we for thy rapid passage,
Gladly for thy happy voyage; fortune
In the distant world is waiting for thee,
In our arms thou'lt find thy prize, and love, too,
When returning."

And when morning came arose an uproar,
And the sailors' joyous shouts awoke us;
All was stirring, all was living, moving,
Bent on sailing with the first kind zephyr.

And the sails soon in the breezes are swelling,
And the sun with fiery love invites us;
Filled the sails are, clouds on high are floating,
On the shore each friend exultant raises
Songs of hope, in giddy joy expecting
Joy the voyage through, as on the morn of sailing,
And the earliest starry nights so radiant.

But by God-sent changing winds ere long he's driven
Sideways from the course he had intended,
And he feigns as though he would surrender,
While he gently striveth to outwit them,
To his goal, e'en when thus pressed, still faithful.

But from out the damp gray distance rising,
Softly now the storm proclaims its advent,
Presseth down each bird upon the waters,
Presseth down the throbbing heart of mortals,
And it cometh. At its stubborn fury,
Wisely every sail the seaman striketh;
With the anguish-laden ball are sporting
Wind and water.

And on yonder shore are gathered standing,
Friends and lovers, trembling for the bold one:
"Why, alas, remained he here not with us!
Ah, the tempest! Cast away by fortune!
Must the good one perish in this fashion?
Might not he perchance . . . Ye great immortals!"

Yet he, like a man, stands by his rudder;
With the bark are sporting wind and water,
Wind and water sport not with his bosom:
On the fierce deep looks he, as a master, —
In his gods, or shipwrecked, or safe landed,
Trusting ever.

THE EAGLE AND THE DOVE.

In search of prey once raised his pinions
An eaglet;
A huntsman's arrow came, and reft
His right wing of all motive power.
Headlong he fell into a myrtle grove,
For three long days on anguish fed,
In torment writhed
Throughout three long, three weary nights;
And then was cured,
Thanks to all-healing Nature's
Soft, omnipresent balm.
He crept away from out the copse,

And stretched his wing — alas!
Lost is all power of flight —
He scarce can lift himself
From off the ground
To catch some mean, unworthy prey,
And rests, deep-sorrowing,
On the low rock beside the stream.
Up to the oak he looks,
Looks up to heaven,
While in his noble eye there gleams a tear.
Then, rustling through the myrtle boughs, behold,
There comes a wanton pair of doves,
Who settle down, and, nodding, strut
O'er the gold sands beside the stream,
And gradually approach;
Their red-tinged eyes, so full of love,
Soon see the inward-sorrowing one.
The male, inquisitively social, leaps
On the next bush, and looks
Upon him kindly and complacently.
"Thou sorrowest," murmurs he:
"Be of good cheer, my friend!
All that is needed for calm happiness
Hast thou not here!
Hast thou not pleasure in the golden bough
That shields thee from the day's fierce glow?
Canst thou not raise thy breast to catch,
On the soft moss beside the brook,
The sun's last rays at even?
Here thou mayest wander through the flowers' fresh
dew,
Pluck from the overflow
The forest-trees provide,
The choicest food, — mayest quench
Thy light thirst at the silvery spring.
O friend, true happiness
Lies in contentedness,
And that contentedness
Finds everywhere enough."
"O wise one!" said the eagle, while he sank
In deep and ever deepening thought —
"O Wisdom! like a dove thou speakest!"

GANYMEDE.

How, in the light of morning,
Round me thou glowest,
Spring, thou beloved one!
With thousand-varying loving bliss
The sacred emotions
Born of thy warmth eternal
Press 'gainst my bosom,
Thou endlessly fair one!
Could I but hold thee clasped
Within mine arms!

Ah! upon thy bosom
Lay I, pining,
And then thy flowers, thy grass,
Were pressing against my heart.
Thou coolest the burning
Thirst of my bosom,
Beauteous morning breeze!
The nightingale then calls me
Sweetly from out of the misty vale.
I come, I come!
Whither? Ah, whither?

Up, up, lies my course.
While downward the clouds
Are hovering, the clouds
Are bending to meet yearning love.
For me,
Within thine arms
Upwards!
Embraced and embracing!
Upwards into thy bosom,
O Father, all-loving!

PROMETHEUS.

Cover thy spacious heavens, Zeus,
With clouds of mist,
And like the boy who lops
The thistles' heads,
Disport with oaks and mountain-peaks;

Yet thou must leave
My earth still standing;
My cottage, too, which was not raised by thee;
Leave me my hearth,
Whose kindly glow
By thee is envied.

I know naught poorer
Under the sun, than ye gods!
Ye nourish painfully,
With sacrifices
And votive prayers,
Your majesty;
Ye would e'en starve,
If children and beggars
Were not trusting fools.

While yet a child,
And ignorant of life,
I turned my wandering gaze
Up toward the sun, as if with him
There were an ear to hear my wailings,
A heart, like mine,
To feel compassion for distress.

Who helped me
Against the Titans' insolence?
Who rescued me from certain death,
From slavery?
Didst thou not do all this thyself,
My sacred glowing heart?
And glowedst, young and good,
Deceived with grateful thanks
To yonder slumbering one?

I honor thee, and why?
Hast thou e'er lightened the sorrows
Of the heavy laden?
Hast thou e'er dried up the tears
Of the anguish-stricken?
Was I not fashioned to be a man
By omnipotent Time,
And by eternal Fate,
Masters of me and thee?

Didst thou e'er fancy
That life I should learn to hate,
And fly to deserts,
Because not all
My blossoming dreams grew ripe?

Here sit I, forming mortals
After my image;
A race resembling me,
To suffer, to weep,
To enjoy, to be glad,
And thee to scorn,
As I!

LIMITS OF HUMANITY.

When the Creator,
The Great, the Eternal,
Sows with indifferent
Hand, from the rolling
Clouds, o'er the earth, His
Lightnings in blessing,
I kiss the nethermost
Hem of His garment,
Lowly inclining
In infantine awe.
For never against
The immortals, a mortal
May measure himself.
Upwards aspiring, if ever
He toucheth the stars with his forehead,
Then do his insecure feet
Stumble and totter and reel;
Then do the cloud and the tempest
Make him their pastime and sport.

Let him with sturdy
Sinewy limbs,
Tread the enduring
Firm-seated earth;
Aiming no further, than
The oak or the vine to compare!

What doth distinguish
Gods from mankind?
This! Multitudinous
Billows roll ever
Before the immortals,
An infinite stream.
We by a billow
Are lifted — a billow
Engulfs us — we sink,
And are heard of no more.

A little round
Encircles our life,
And races unnumbered
Extend through the ages,
Linked by existence's
Infinite chain.

◆

THE GODLIKE.

Noble be man,
Helpful and good!
For that alone
Distinguisheth him
From all the beings
Unto us known.

Hail to the beings,
Unknown and glorious,
Whom we forebode!
From *his* example
Learn we to know them!
For unfeeling
Nature is ever.

On bad and on good
The sun alike shineth;
And on the wicked,
As on the best,
The moon and stars gleam.

Tempest and torrent,
Thunder and hail,
Roar on their path,

Seizing the while,
As they haste onward,
One after another.

Even so, fortune
Gropes 'mid the throng—
Innocent boyhood's
Curly head seizing,—
Seizing the hoary
Head of the sinner.

After laws mighty,
Brazen, eternal,
Must all we mortals
Finish the circuit
Of our existence.

Man, and man only
Can do the impossible;
He 'tis distinguisheth,
Chooseth and judgeth;
He to the moment
Endurance can lend.

He and he only
The good can reward,
The bad can he punish,
Can heal and can save;
All that wanders and strays
Can usefully blend.

And we pay homage
To the immortals
As though they were men,
And did in the great,
What the best, in the small,
Does or might do.

Be the man that is noble,
Both helpful and good,
Unweariedly forming
The right and the useful,
A type of those beings
Our mind hath foreshadowed.

THE GERMAN PARNASSUS.

'Neath the shadow
  Of these bushes
On the meadow
  Where the cooling water gushes,
Phœbus gave me, when a boy,
All life's fulness to enjoy.
So, in silence, as the God
Bade them with his sovereign nod,
Sacred Muses trained my days
To his praise, —
With the bright and silvery flood
Of Parnassus stirred my blood,
And the seal so pure and chaste
By them on my lips was placed.

With her modest pinions, see,
Philomel encircles me!
In these bushes, in yon grove,
  Calls she to her sister-throng,
  And their heavenly choral song
Teaches me to dream of love.

Fulness waxes in my breast
Of emotions social, blest;
Friendship's nurtured, — love awakes,—
And the silence Phœbus breaks
Of his mountains, of his vales,
Sweetly blow the balmy gales;
All for whom he shows affection,
Who are worthy his protection,
Gladly follow his direction.

This one comes with joyous bearing
  And with open, radiant gaze;
That a sterner look is wearing,
This one, scarcely cured, with daring
  Wakes the strength of former days;
For the sweet, destructive flame
Pierced his marrow and his frame.
That which Amor stole before
Phœbus only can restore.

Peace, and joy, and harmony,
Aspirations pure and free.

Brethren, rise ye!
Numbers prize ye!
Deeds of worth resemble they.
Who can better than the bard
Guide a friend when gone astray?
If his duty he regard,
More he'll do, than others may.

Yes! afar I hear them sing!
Yes! I hear them touch the string,
And with mighty godlike stroke
Right and duty they inspire
And evoke,
As they sing and wake the lyre,
Tendencies of noblest worth,
To each type of strength give birth.

Phantasies of sweetest power
Flower
Round about on every bough,
Bending now
Like the magic wood of old,
'Neath the fruit that gleams like gold.

What we feel and what we view
In the land of highest bliss, —
This dear soil, a sun like this, —
Lures the best of women too.
And the Muses' breathings blest
Rouse the maiden's gentle breast,
Tune the throat to minstrelsy,
And with cheeks of beauteous dye,
Bid it sing a worthy song,
Sit the sister-band among;
And their strains grow softer still,
As they vie with earnest will.

One amongst the band betimes
Goes to wander
By the beeches, 'neath the limes,
Yonder seeking, finding yonder

That which in the morning-grove
She had lost through roguish Love,
All her breast's first aspirations,
And her heart's calm meditations.
To the shady wood so fair
Gently stealing,
Takes she that which man can ne'er
Duly merit, — each soft feeling, —
Disregards the noontide ray
And the dew at close of day, —
In the plain her path she loses.
Ne'er disturb her on her way!
Seek her silently, ye Muses!

Shouts I hear, wherein the sound
Of the waterfall is drowned.
From the grove loud clamors rise,
Strange the tumult, strange the cries.
See I rightly? Can it be?
To the very sanctuary,
Lo, an impious troop in-hies!

O'er the land
Streams the band;
Hot desire,
Drunken-fire
In their gaze
Wildly plays, —
Makes the hair
Bristle there.
And the troop,
With fell swoop,
Women, men,
Coming then,
Ply their blows
And expose,
Void of shame,
All the frame.
Iron shot,
Fierce and hot,
Strike with fear
On the ear;
All they slay
On their way
O'er the land
Pours the band;
All take flight
At their sight
Ah, o'er every plant they rush!
Ah, their cruel footsteps crush
All the flowers that fill their path!
Who will dare to stem their wrath?

Brethren, let us venture all!
Virtue in your pure cheek glows.
Phœbus will attend our call
When he sees our heavy woes;

And that we may have aright
Weapons suited to the fight,
He the mountain shaketh now —
From its brow
Rattling down
Stone on stone
Through the thicket spread appear.
Brethren, seize them! Wherefore fear?
Now the villain crew assail,
As though with a storm of hail,
And expel the strangers wild
From these regions soft and mild
Where the sun has ever smiled!

What strange wonder do I see?
Can it be?
All my limbs of power are reft,
And all strength my hand has left.
Can it be?
None are strangers that I see!
And our brethren 'tis who go
On before, the way to show!
Oh, the reckless, impious ones!
How they, with their jarring tones,
Beat the time, as on they hie!
Quick, my brethren! — let us fly!

To the rash ones, yet a word!
Ay, my voice shall now be heard,
As a peal of thunder, strong!
Words as poets' arms were made, —
When the god will be obeyed,
Follow fast his darts ere long.

Was it possible that ye
Thus your godlike dignity
Should forget? The Thyrsus rude
Must a heavy burden feel
To the hand but wont to steal
O'er the lyre in gentle mood.
From the sparkling waterfalls,
From the brook that purling calls,
Shall Silenus' loathsome beast
Be allowed at will to feast?

Aganippe's* wave he sips
With profane and spreading lips,—
With ungainly feet stamps madly,
Till the waters flow on sadly.

Fain I'd think myself deluded
  In the saddening sounds I hear;
From the holy glades secluded
  Hateful tones assail the ear.
Laughter wild (exchange how mournful!)
  Takes the place of love's sweet dream;
Women-haters and the scornful
  In exulting chorus scream.
Nightingale and turtle-dove
  Fly their nests so warm and chaste,
And, inflamed with sensual love,
  Holds the Faun the Nymph embraced.
Here a garment's torn away,
  Scoffs succeed their sated bliss,
While the god, with angry ray,
  Looks upon each impious kiss.

Vapor, smoke, as from a fire,
  And advancing clouds I view;
Chords not only grace the lyre,
  For the bow its chords hath, too.
Even the adorer's heart
  Dreads the wild advancing band,
For the flames that round them dart
  Show the fierce destroyer's hand.
Oh, neglect not what I say,
  For I speak it lovingly!
From our boundaries haste away,
  From the god's dread anger fly!
Cleanse once more the holy place,
  Turn the savage train aside!
Earth contains upon its face
  Many a spot unsanctified;
Here we only prize the good.
  Stars unsullied round us burn.

A spring in Bœotia, which arose out of Mount Helicon, and was sacred to Apollo and the Muses.

If ye, in repentant mood,
From your wanderings would return,
If ye fail to find the bliss
That ye found with *us* of yore,—
Or when lawless mirth like this
Gives your hearts delight no more,—
Then return in pilgrim guise,
Gladly up the mountain go,
While your strains repentant rise,
And our brethren's advent show.

Let a new-born wreath entwine
Solemnly your temples round;
Rapture glows in hearts divine
When a long-lost sinner's found.
Swifter e'en the Lethe's flood
Round Death's silent house can play,
Every error of the good
Will love's chalice wash away.
All will haste your steps to meet,
As ye come in majesty,—
Men your blessing will entreat;—
Ours ye thus will doubly be!

◆

LOVE'S DISTRESSES.

Who will hear me? Whom shall I lament to?
Who would pity me that heard my sorrows?
Ah, the lip that erst so many raptures
Used to taste, and used to give responsive,
Now is cloven, and it pains me sorely;
And it is not thus severely wounded
By my mistress having caught me fiercely,
And then gently bitten me, intending
To secure her friend more firmly to her:
No, my tender lip is cracked thus, only
By the winds, o'er rime and frost proceeding,
Pointed, sharp, unloving, having met me.
Now the noble grape's bright juice commingled
With the bee's sweet juice, upon the fire
Of my hearth shall ease me of my torment.
Ah, what use will all this be, if with it
Love adds not a drop of his own balsam?

LILI'S MENAGERIE.

[Goethe describes this much-admired poem, which he wrote in honor of his love Lili, as being "designed to change his surrender of her into despair, by drolly-fretful images."]

THERE'S no menagerie, I vow,
  Excels my Lili's at this minute;
  She keeps the strangest creatures in it,
And catches them, she knows not how.
Oh, how they hop, and run, and rave,
And their clipped pinions wildly wave, —
Poor princes, who must all endure
The pangs of love that naught can cure.

What is the fairy's name? — Is it Lili? — Ask not me!
Give thanks to Heaven if she's unknown to thee.

Oh, what a cackling, what a shrieking
  When near the door she takes her stand,
  With her food-basket in her hand!
Oh, what a croaking, what a squeaking!
Alive all the trees and the bushes appear,
While to her feet whole troops draw near;
The very fish within the water clear
Splash with impatience and their heads protrude;
And then she throws around the food
With such a look! — the very gods delighting
(To say naught of beasts). There begins, then, a biting,
A picking, a pecking, a sipping,
And each o'er the legs of another is tripping,
And pushing, and pressing, and flapping,
And chasing, and fuming, and snapping,
  And all for one small piece of bread,
To which, though dry, her fair hands give a taste,
As though it in ambrosia had been placed.

And then her look! the tone
  With which she calls: Pipi! Pipi!
Would draw Jove's eagle from his throne;
Yes, Venus' turtle-doves, I ween,
And the vain peacock e'en,
Would come, I swear,
Soon as that tone had reached them through the air.

E'en from a forest dark had she
Enticed a bear, unlicked, ill-bred,
And by her wiles alluring, led
To join the gentle company,
Until as tame as they was he:
(Up to a certain point, be it understood!)
How fair, and, ah! how good
She seemed to be! I would have drained my blood
To water e'en her flow'rets sweet.

"Thou sayest: *I!* Who? How? And where?"—
Well, to be plain, good sirs — I am the bear;
In a net-apron, caught, alas!
Chained by a silk-thread at her feet.
But how this wonder came to pass
I'll tell some day, if ye are curious;
Just now, my temper's much too furious.

Ah, when I'm in the corner placed,
And hear afar the creatures snapping,
And see the flipping and the flapping,
I turn around
With growling sound,
And backward run a step in haste,
And look around
With growling sound,
Then run again a step in haste,
And to my former post go round.

But suddenly my anger grows,
A mighty spirit fills my nose,
My inward feelings all revolt.
A creature such as thou! a dolt!
Pipi, a squirrel able nuts to crack!
I bristle up my shaggy back,
Unused a slave to be.
I'm laughed at by each trim and upstart tree
To scorn. The bowling green I fly,
With neatly-mown and well-kept grass;
The box makes faces as I pass, —
Into the darkest thicket hasten I,
Hoping to 'scape from the ring,
Over the palings to spring!

Vainly I leap and climb;
I feel a leaden spell
That pinions me as well,
And when I'm fully wearied out in time,
I lay me down beside some mock-cascade,
And roll myself half dead, and foam, and cry,
And, ah! no Oreads hear my sigh,
Excepting those of china made!

But, ah, with sudden power,
In all my members blissful feelings reign!
'Tis she who singeth yonder in her bower!
I hear that darling, darling voice again.
The air is warm, and teems with fragrance clear,
Sings she perchance for me alone to hear?
I haste, and trample down the shrubs amain;
The trees make way, the bushes all retreat,
And so — the beast is lying at her feet.

She looks at him: "The monster's droll enough!
He's, for a bear, too mild,
Yet, for a dog, too wild,
So shaggy, clumsy, rough!"
Up in his back she gently strokes her foot;
He thinks himself in Paradise.
What feelings through his seven senses shoot!
But she looks on with careless eyes.
I lick her soles, and kiss her shoes,
As gently as a bear well may;
Softly I rise, and with a clever ruse
Leap on her knee. — On a propitious day
She suffers it; my ears then tickles she,
And hits me a hard blow in wanton play;
I growl with new-born ecstasy;
Then speaks she in a sweet vain jest, I wot;
"*Allons tout doux! eh! la menotte!*
Et faites serviteur
Comme un joli seigneur."
Thus she proceeds with sport and glee;
Hope fills the oft-deluded beast;
Yet if one moment he would lazy be,
Her fondness all at once hath ceased.

She doth a flask of balsam fire possess,
  Sweeter than honey bees can make,
  One drop of which she'll on her finger take,
When softened by his love and faithfulness,
  Wherewith her monster's raging thirst to slake;
Then leaves me to myself, and flies at last,
And I, unbound, yet prisoned fast
By magic, follow in her train,
Seek for her, tremble, fly again.
The hapless creature thus tormenteth she,
  Regardless of his pleasure or his woe;
Ha! oft half-opened does she leave the door for me,
  And sideways looks to learn if I will fly or no;
And I — O gods! your hands alone
Can end the spell that's o'er me thrown;
Free me, and gratitude my heart will fill;
  And yet from heaven ye send me down no aid —
  Not quite in vain doth life my limbs pervade:
I feel it! Strength is left me still.

◆

TO CHARLOTTE.

Midst the noise of merriment and glee,
  'Midst full many a sorrow, many a care,
Charlotte, I remember, *we* remember thee,
  How at evening's hour so fair,
Thou a kindly hand didst reach us,
  When thou, in some happy place
  Where more fair is Nature's face,
  Many a lightly-hidden trace
Of a spirit loved didst teach us.

Well 'tis that thy worth I rightly knew, —
  That I, in the hour when first we met,
  While the first impression filled me yet,
Called thee then a girl both good and true.

Reared in silence, calmly, knowing naught,
  On the world we suddenly are thrown;
Hundred thousand billows round us sport;
  All things charm us — many please alone,

Many grieve us, and as hour on hour is stealing,
To and fro our restless natures sway;
First we feel, and then we find each feeling
By the changeful world-stream borne away.

Well I know, we oft within us find
Many a hope and many a smart.
Charlotte, who can know our mind?
Charlotte, who can know our heart?
Ah! 'twould fain be understood, 'twould fain o'erflo
In some creature's fellow-feelings blest,
And, with trust, in twofold measure know
All the grief and joy in Nature's breast.

Then thine eye is oft around thee cast,
But in vain, for all seems closed forever;
Thus the fairest part of life is madly passed
Free from storm, but resting never;
To thy sorrow thou'rt to-day repelled
By what yesterday obeyed thee.
Can that world by thee be worthy held
Which so oft betrayed thee?

Which, 'mid all thy pleasures and thy pains,
Lived in selfish, unconcerned repose?
See, the soul its secret cells regains,
And the heart — makes haste to close.
Thus found I thee, and gladly went to meet thee;
"She's worthy of all love!" I cried,
And prayed that Heaven with purest bliss might greet thee,
Which in thy friend it richly hath supplied.

MORNING LAMENT.

Oh, thou cruel, deadly-lovely maiden,
Tell me what great sin have I committed,
That thou keepest me to the rack thus fastened,
That thou hast thy solemn promise broken?

'Twas but yestere'en that thou with fondness
Pressed my hand, and these sweet accents murmured:
"Yes, I'll come, I'll come when morn approacheth,
Come, my friend, full surely to thy chamber."

On the latch I left my doors, unfastened,
Having first with care tried all the hinges,
And rejoiced right well to find they creaked not.

What a night of expectation passed I!
For I watched, and every chime I numbered;
If perchance I slept a few short moments,
Still my heart remained awake forever,
And awoke me from my gentle slumbers.

Yes, then blessed I night's o'erhanging darkness,
That so calmly covered all things round me;
I enjoyed the universal silence,
While I listened ever in the silence,
If perchance the slightest sounds were stirring.

"Had she only thoughts, *my* thoughts resembling,
Had she only feelings, like *my* feelings,
She would not await the dawn of morning,
But, ere this, would surely have been with me."

Skipped a kitten on the floor above me,
Scratched a mouse a panel in the corner,
Was there in the house the slightest motion,
Ever hoped I that I heard thy footstep,
Ever thought I that I heard thee coming.

And so lay I long, and ever longer,
And already was the daylight dawning,
And both here and there were signs of movement.

"Is it *yon* door? Were it *my* door only!"
In my bed I leaned upon my elbow,
Looking toward the door, now half-apparent,
If perchance it might not be in motion.
Both the wings upon the latch continued,
On the quiet hinges calmly hanging.

And the day grew bright and brighter ever;
And I heard my neighbor's door unbolted,
As he went to earn his daily wages,
And ere long I heard the wagons rumbling,
And the city gates were also opened,
While the market-place, in every corner,
Teemed with life and bustle and confusion.

In the house was going now and coming
Up and down the stairs, and doors were creaking
Backwards now, now forwards, — footsteps clattered,
Yet, as though it were a thing all-living,
From my cherished hope I could not tear me.

When at length the sun, in hated splendor,
Fell upon my walls, upon my windows,
Up I sprang, and hastened to the garden,
There to blend my breath, so hot and yearning,
With the cool refreshing morning breezes,
And, it might be, even there to meet thee:
But I cannot find thee in the arbor,
Or the avenue of lofty lindens.

THE VISIT.

To-day I thought to steal upon my darling,
But the door was closed of her apartments.
Of a key, however, I am master;
Noiselessly I glide within the doorway.

In the salon found I not the maiden,
Found the maiden not within the parlor,
But on tiptoe entering her chamber,
There I find her, sunk in graceful slumber,
In her robes, upon the sofa lying.
At her work had slumber overtaken her;
And the netting, with the needles, rested
'Twixt the fair hands that hung crosswise folded.
Silently I sate me down beside her,
And awhile I mused if I should wake her.

Awed me then the peace so sweet and holy,
Which upon her drooping eyelids rested:
On her lips abode a trustful quiet,
Beauty on her cheeks, the home of beauty;
And the tranquil movement of her bosom,
Showed how innocent the heart that moved it.
All her limbs, so gracefully reposing,
Lay relaxed by sleep's delicious balsam:
There I sat enraptured, and the vision
Curbed the impulse I had felt to wake her,
With a spell that close and closer bound me.

"O my love," I murmured, "and can slumbe
Which unmasks whate'er is false and formal,
Can he injure thee not, nor unravel
Ought to shake thy lover's fondest fancy?

"Thy dear eyes are closed, those eyes so tender—
Eyes, which only lifted are enchantment,
Those sweet lips, oh, lips so sweet they stir not,
Stir not nor for speech, nor yet for kisses!
All unloosened is the magic cincture
Of thine arms, that otherwhiles enclasp me,
And the hand, the dainty sweet companion
Of all best endearments, void of motion.
Were my thoughts of thee delusion merely—
Were my love for thee but self-deception,
I must now discern the truth, when Amor
Stands beside me thus, with eyes unbandaged."

Long while thus I sat, with heart elated,
Thinking of her worth and my devotion;
Sleeping, she with rapture so had filled me,
That I did not venture to awake her.

Placing softly down upon her table
Two pomegranates and two half-blown rosebuds,
Gently, gently, glide I from the chamber.
When she opes her eyes, my own heart's darling,
And they rest upon my gift, with wonder
Will she muse, how such fine token ever
There should be, and yet her door unopened.

When to-night again I see my angel,
Oh, how she will joy, and twofold pay me,
For this tribute of my heart's devotion!

◆

THE MUSAGETES.

Often in the winter midnight,
Prayed I to the blessed Muses—
"Here is not the red of morning,
Tardy is the day in breaking;
Light for me, ye blessed Muses,
Light the lamp of inspiration,

That its mellow ray may serve me,
'Stead of Phœbus and Aurora!"
But they left me to my slumber,
Dull, and spiritless, and torpid;
And the morning's lazy leisure
Ushered in a useless day.

Then when spring began to kindle,
Thus the nightingales I conjured —
"Sweetest nightingales, oh, warble,
Warble early at my window!
Wake me from the heavy slumber
That in magic fetters holds me!"
And the love-o'erflowing singers
Sang all night around my window
All their rarest melodies;
Kept awake the soul within me;
Gave me trances, aspirations,
Glimpses of divine emotion,
Soothing, melting, undefined.
So the night passed lightly over,
And Aurora found me sleeping,
Scarce I wakened with the sun.

Lastly, came the glorious summer:
What aroused me then from dreaming,
At the earliest dawn of morning?
'Twas the buzzing of the flies!
They are touched by no compassion,
Ruthlessly they do their duty;
Though the half-awakened sleeper
Greets them with a malediction.
Unabashed their clan they summon,
And the humming swarm is vocal,
And they banish from my eyelids,
All the luxury of sleep.

Straightway start I from my pillow,
Leave the close-beleaguered chamber,
Sally out to seek the Muses,
In the haunts to them are dearest.
And I find them 'neath the beeches,
Waiting for me, sometimes chiding,
For my over-long delay.

Thus I owe you, libelled insects,
Thanks for many hours of rapture.
Dullards may indeed abuse you,
Since you wake them to sensation;
But the poet ought to prize you,
And I thank you, as a poet,
Ranking you, beyond all others
As the ushers to the Muse.

◆

THE WATER-MAN.

[This ballad cannot be claimed as one of Goethe's original compositions, it being a very close translation of an old Danish ballad, entitled, "The Mer-man, and Marstig's daughter." As, however, it appears in all the collections, and has often been quoted as a favorable specimen of Goethe's skill in assuming the simple style of the popular Northern ballads, we have deemed it advisable to give a version.]

"Oh, mother! rede me well, I pray;
How shall I woo me yon winsome May?"

She has built him a horse of the water clear,
The saddle and bridle of sea-sand were.

He has donned the garb of a knight so gay,
And to Mary's Kirk he has ridden away.

He tied his steed to the chancel door,
And he stepped round the Kirk three times and four.

He has boune him into the Kirk, and all
Drew near to gaze on him, great and small.

The priest he was standing in the quire; —
"What gay young gallant comes branking here?"

The winsome maid, to herself said she,
"Oh, were that gay young gallant for me!"

He stepped o'er one stool, he stepped o'er two;
"Oh, maiden, plight me thine oath so true!"

He stepped o'er three stools, he stepped o'er four;
"Wilt be mine, sweet May, forevermore?"

She gave him her hand of the drifted snow —
"Here hast thou my troth, and with thee I'll go."

They went from the Kirk with the bridal train,
They danced in glee and they danced full fain;

They danced them down to the salt-sea strand,
And they left them standing there, hand in hand.

"Now wait thee, love, with my steed so free,
And the bonniest bark I'll bring for thee."

And when they passed to the white, white sand,
The ships came sailing on to the land;

But when they were out in the midst of the sound,
Down went they all in the deep profound!

Long, long on the shore, when the winds were
They heard from the waters the maiden's cry.

I rede ye, damsels, as best I can —
Tread not the dance with the Water-Man!

◆

PSYCHE.

The Muses, maiden sisters, chose
To teach poor Psyche arts poetic;
But, spite of all their rules æsthetic,
She never could emerge from prose.

No dulcet sounds escaped her lyre,
E'en when the summer nights were nigh;
Till Cupid came, with glance of fire,
And taught her all the mystery.

◆

IN ABSENCE.

And shall I then regain thee never?
My beautiful! And art thou flown
Still in mine ears resounds forever
Thy every word, thy every tone.

As through the air, when morn is springing
The wanderer peers in vain, to trace
The lark, that o'er him high is singing,
Hid in the azure depth of space;

So, love, through field and forest lonely
My sad eyes roam in quest of thee;
My songs are tuned to thee, thee only;
Oh, come, my own love, back to me!

THE MAGIC NET.

Do I see a contest yonder?
See I miracles or pastimes?
Beauteous urchins, five in number,
'Gainst five sisters fair contending, —
Measured is the time they're beating —
At a bright enchantress' bidding.
Glittering spears by some are wielded,
Threads are others nimbly twining,
So that in their snares, the weapons,
One would think, must needs be captured.
Soon, in truth, the spears are prisoned;
Yet they, in the gentle war-dance,
One by one escape their fetters
In the row of loops so tender,
That make haste to seize a free one
Soon as they release a captive.

So with contests, strivings, triumphs,
Flying now, and now returning,
Is an artful net soon woven,
In its whiteness like the snow-flakes,
That, from light amid the darkness,
Draw their streaky lines so varied,
As e'en colors scarce can draw them.

Who shall now receive that garment
Far beyond all others wished-for?
Whom our much-loved mistress favor
As her own acknowledged servant?
I am blest by kindly Fortune's
Tokens true, in silence prayed for!
And I feel myself held captive,
To her service now devoted.

Yet, e'en while I, thus enraptured,
Thus adorned, am proudly wandering,
See! yon wantons are entwining,
Void of strife with secret ardor,
Other nets, each fine and finer,
Threads of twilight interweaving,
Moonbeams sweet, night-violets' balsam.

Ere the net is noticed by us,
Is a happier one imprisoned,
Whom we, one and all, togethe.
Greet with envy and with blessings.

◆

THE CHURCH WINDOW.

The minster window, richly glowing,
With many a gorgeous stain and dye,
Itself a parable, is showing,
The might, the power of Poesy.

Look on it from the outer square,
And it is only dark and dreary;
Yon blockhead always views it there,
And swears its aspect makes him weary.

But enter once the holy portal —
What splendor bursts upon the eye!
There symbols, deeds, and forms immortal,
Are blazing forth in majesty.

Be thankful you, who have the gift
To read and feel each sacred story;
And O, be reverent when you lift
Your eyes to look on heavenly glory!

◆

THE CAVALIER'S CHOICE.

[This lively little ballad occurs in one of Goethe's Operas, very charming compositions, which probably are less read than they deserve. It is not altogether original, being evidently founded on a popular Scottish ditty, called indiscriminately "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship," or the "Laird of Roslin's Daughter," in which precisely the same questions are propounded and answered. Truth compels us to say that, in point of merit, the superiority lies with the Scottish ballad. This being a case of disputed property, or rather commonty, the translator has allowed himself more license in rendering than has been used in any other instance in the present collection.]

It was a gallant cavalier
Of honor and renown,
And all to seek a ladye-love
He rode from town to town.
Till at a widow-woman's door
He drew the rein so free;
For at her side the knight espied
Her comely daughters three.

Well might he gaze upon them,
  For they were fair and tall;
Ye never have seen fairer maids,
  In bower nor yet in hall.
Small marvel if the gallant's heart
  Beat quicker in his breast:
'Twas hard to choose, and hard to lose —
  How might he wale the best?

"Now, maidens, pretty maidens mine,
  Who'll rede me riddles three?
And she who answers best of all
  Shall be mine own ladye!"
I ween they blushed as maidens do,
  When such rare words they hear —
"Now speak thy riddles if thou wilt,
  Thou gay young cavalier!"

What's longer than the longest path?
  First tell ye that to me;
And tell me what is deeper yet,
  Than is the deepest sea?
And tell me what is louder far,
  Than is the loudest horn?
And tell me what hath sharper point,
  Than e'en the sharpest thorn?

"And tell me what is greener yet,
  Than greenest grass on hill?
And tell me what is crueller
  Than a wicked woman's will?"
The eldest and the second maid,
  They mused and thought awhile;
But the youngest she looked upward,
  And spoke with merry smile.

"O, love is surely longer far,
  Than the longest paths that be;
And hell, they say, is deeper yet,
  Than is the deepest sea;
The roll of thunder is more loud,
  Than is the loudest horn;
And hunger it is worse to bear
  Than sharpest wound of thorn;

"The copper sweat is greener yet,
  Than is the grass on hill;
And the foul fiend he is crueller
  Than any woman's will."
He leapt so lightly from his steed,
  He took her by the hand;
"Sweet maid, my riddles thou hast read,
  Be lady of my land!"

The eldest and the second maid,
  They pondered and were dumb,
And there, perchance, are waiting yet
  Till another wooer come,
Then, maidens, take this warning word,
  Be neither slow nor shy,
But always, when a lover speaks,
  Look kindly, and reply.

◆

THE ARTIST'S MORNING SONG.

My dwelling is the Muses' home —
  What matters it how small?
And here, within my heart, is set
  The holiest place of all.

When, wakened by the early sun,
  I rise from slumbers sound,
I see the ever-living forms
  In radiance grouped around.

I pray, and songs of thanks and praise
  Are more than half my prayer,
With simple notes of music, tuned
  To some harmonious air.

I bow before the altar then,
  And read, as well I may,
From noble Homer's master-work,
  The lesson for the day.

He takes me to the furious fight,
  Where lion-warriors throng;
Where god-descended heroes whirl
  In iron cars along.

And steeds go down before the cars;
 And round the cumbered wheel,
Both friend and foe are rolling now,
 All blood from head to heel!

Then comes the champion of them all,
 Pelides' friend is he,
And crashes through the dense array,
 Though thousands ten they be!

And ever smites that fiery sword
 Through helmet, shield, and mail,
Until he falls by craft divine,
 Where might could not prevail.

Down from the glorious pile he rolls,
 Which he himself had made,
And foemen trample on the limbs
 From which they shrank afraid.

Then start I up, with arms in hand,
 What arms the painter bears;
And soon along my kindling wall
 The fight at Troy appears.

On! on again! The wrath is here
 Of battle rolling red;
Shield strikes on shield, and sword on helm,
 And dead men fall on dead!

I throng into the inner press,
 Where loudest rings the din;
For there, around their hero's corpse,
 Fight on his furious kin!

A rescue! rescue! bear him hence
 Into the leaguer near;
Pour balsam in his glorious wounds,
 And weep above his bier!

And when from that hot trance I pass,
 Great Love, I feel thy charm;
There hangs my lady's picture near —
 A picture, yet so warm!

How fair she was, reclining there;
  What languish in her look!
How thrilled her glance through all my frame,
  The very pencil shook.

Her eyes, her cheeks, her lovely lips,
  Were all the world to me;
And in my breast a younger life
  Rose wild and wantonly.

Oh! turn again, and bide thee here,
  Nor fear such rude alarms;
How could I think of battles more
  With thee within my arms!

But thou shalt lend thy perfect form
  To all I fashion best;
I'll paint thee first, Madonna-wise,
  The infant on thy breast.

I'll paint thee as a startled nymph,
  Myself a following faun;
And still pursue thy flying feet
  Across the woodland lawn.

With helm on head, like Mars, I'll lie
  By thee, the Queen of Love,
And draw a net around us twain,
  And smile on heaven above:

And every god that comes shall pour
  His blessings on thy head,
And envious eyes be far away
  From that dear marriage-bed!

◆

THE GOBLET.

In my hands I held a brimming goblet,
Sculptured quaintly by the carver's cunning,
Quaffed with eager lips the strong nepenthe,
So at once to drown all care and anguish.

Then came Amor in and found me sitting,
And he smiled a smile of serious sweetness
As in pity of my foolish purpose.

"Friend, I know a vessel nobler, fairer,
Worthy all your soul in it to bury;
Say what guerdon, if to thee I give it,
Fill it for thee with a rarer nectar?"

Oh, he kept his promise, and how truly!
Lida, when with thy dear love he blessed me—
Me, that for thy sake had long been pining.

When I clasp thy beauties to my bosom,
And from thy fond lips, so fond and faithful,
Drink the balm of long, long stored affection,
Thus entranced, I commune with my spirit.

"No; has never God, save Amor, fashioned
Vessel such as this, nor e'er possessed it!
Forms so glorious ne'er were shaped by Vulcan,
With his finest soul-enprompted mallet.

"On the leaf-clad mountains may Lyæus
With his fauns, the hoariest, the sagest,
Cull the clusters of the daintiest savor,
Yea, may guide the mystic fermentation,
Draughts like this not all his skill can furnish!"

◆

FROM AN ALBUM OF 1604.

Hope provides wings to thought, and love to hope.
Rise up to Cynthia, love, when night is clearest,
And say, that as on high her figure changeth,
So, upon earth, my joy decays and grows.
And whisper in her ear with modest softness,
How doubt oft hung its head, and truth oft wept.
And, oh, ye thoughts, distrustfully inclined,
If ye are therefore by the loved one chided,
Answer: 'tis true ye change, but alter not.
As she remains the same, yet changeth ever.
Doubt may invade the heart, but poisons not,
For love is sweeter, by suspicion flavored.
If it with anger overcasts the eye,
And heaven's bright purity perversely blackens,
Then zephyr-sighs straight scare the clouds away,
And, changed to tears, dissolve them into rain.
Thought, hope, and love remain there as before,
Till Cynthia gleams upon me as of old.

TO THE GRASSHOPPER.

AFTER ANACREON.

[The strong resemblance of this fine poem to Cowley's Ode bearing the same name, and beginning, "Happy insect! what can be," will be at once seen.]

Happy art thou, darling insect,
Who upon the trees' tall branches,
By a modest draught inspired,
Singing, like a monarch livest!
Thou possessest as thy portion
All that on the plains thou seest,
All that by the hours is brought thee;
'Mongst the husbandmen thou livest,
As a friend, uninjured by them,
Thou whom mortals love to honor,
Herald sweet of sweet Spring's advent!
Yes, thou'rt loved by all the Muses,
Phœbus' self, too, needs must love thee;
They their silver voices gave thee,
Age can never steal upon thee.
Wise and gentle friend of poets,
Born a creature fleshless, bloodless,
Though Earth's daughter, free from suffering,
To the gods e'en almost equal.

◆

FROM "THE SORROWS OF YOUNG WERTHER."

[Prefixed to the second edition.]

Every youth for love's sweet portion sighs,
  Every maiden sighs to win man's love;
Why, alas! should bitter pain arise
  From the noblest passion that we prove?

Thou, kind soul, bewailest, lovest him well,
  From disgrace his memory's saved by thee;
Lo, his spirit sighs from out its cell:
  Be a man, nor seek to follow me.

◆

Tender thoughts and sweet recollection,
That is life in its greatest perfection.

TRILOGY OF PASSION.

I. TO WERTHER.

[This poem, written at the age of seventy-five, was appended to an edition of "Werther," published at that time.]

Once more, then, much-wept shadow, thou dost dare
Boldly to face the day's clear light,
To meet me on fresh blooming meadows fair,
And dost not tremble at my sight.
Those happy times appear returned once more.
When on one field we quaffed refreshing dew,
And, when the day's unwelcome toil were o'er,
The farewell sunbeams blessed our ravished view;
Fate bade thee go, — to linger here was mine, —
Going the first, the smaller loss was thine.

The life of man appears a glorious fate:
The day how lovely and the night how great!
And we 'mid Paradise-like raptures placed,
The sun's bright glory scarce have learned to taste,
When strange contending feelings dimly cover,
Now us, and now the forms that round us hover;
One's feelings by no other are supplied,
'Tis dark without, if all is bright inside;
An outward brightness veils my saddened mood,
When Fortune smiles, — how seldom understood!

Now think we that we know her, and with might
A woman's beauteous form instils delight;
The youth, as glad as in his infancy,
The spring-time treads, as though the spring were he.
Ravished, amazed, he asks, how this is done?
He looks around, the world appears his own.
With careless speed he wanders on through space,
Nor walls, nor palaces can check his race;
As some gay flight of birds round tree-tops plays,
So 'tis with him who round his mistress strays;
He seeks from Æther, which he'd leave behind him,
The faithful look that fondly serves to bind him.

Yet first too early warned, and then too late,
He feels his flight restrained, is captured straight;
To meet again is sweet, to part is sad,
Again to meet again is still more glad,

And years in one short moment are enshrined;
But, oh, the harsh farewell is hid behind!

Thou smilest, friend, with fitting thoughts inspired;
By a dread parting was thy fame acquired;
Thy mournful destiny we sorrowed o'er,
For weal and woe thou left'st us evermore,
And then again the passions' wavering force
Drew us along in labyrinthine course;
And we, consumed by constant misery,
At length must part — and parting is to die!
How moving is it, when the minstrel sings,
To 'scape the death that separation brings!
Oh, grant, some god, to one who suffers so,
To tell, half-guilty, his sad tale of woe!

II. ELEGY.

When man had ceased to utter his lament,
A god then let me tell my tale of sorrow.

WHAT hope of once more meeting is there now
  In the still-closèd blossoms of this day?
Both heaven and hell thrown open seest thou;
  What wavering thoughts within the bosom play! —
No longer doubt! Descending from the sky,
She lifts thee in her arms to realms on high.

And thus thou into Paradise wert brought,
  As worthy of a pure and endless life;
Nothing was left, no wish, no hope, no thought,
  Here was the boundary of thine inmost strife;
And seeing one so fair, so glorified,
The fount of yearning tears was straightway dried.

No motion stirred the day's revolving wheel,
  In their own front the minutes seemed to go;
The evening kiss, a true and binding seal,
  Ne'er changing till the morrow's sunlight glow.
The hours resembled sisters as they went,
Yet each one from another different.

The last hour's kiss, so sadly sweet, effaced
  A beauteous network of entwining love.
Now on the threshold pause the feet, now haste,
  As though a flaming cherub bade them move;

The unwilling eye the dark road wanders o'er,
Backward it looks, but closed it sees the door.

And now within itself is closed this breast,
  As though it ne'er were open, and as though,
Vying with ev'ry star, no moments blest
  Had, in its presence, felt a kindling glow;
Sadness, reproach, repentance, weight of care,
Hang heavy on it in the sultry air.

Is not the world still left? The rocky steeps,
  Are they with holy shades no longer crowned?
Grows not the harvest ripe? No longer creeps
  The espalier by the stream, — the copse around?
Doth not the wondrous arch of heaven still rise,
Now rich in shape, now shapeless to the eyes?

As, seraph-like, from out the dark clouds' chorus,
  With softness woven, graceful, light, and fair,
Resembling Her, in the blue æther o'er us,
  A slender figure hovers in the air, —
Thus didst thou see her joyously advance,
The fairest of the fairest in the dance.

Yet but a moment dost thou boldly dare
  To clasp an airy form instead of hers;
Back to thine heart! thou'lt find it better there,
  For there in changeful guise her image stirs;
What erst was one, to many turneth fast,
In thousand forms, each dearer than the last.

As at the door, on meeting, lingered she,
  And step by step my faithful ardor blessed,
For the last kiss herself entreated me,
  And on my lips the last, last kiss impressed, —
Thus clearly traced, the loved one's form we view,
With flames engraven on a heart so true, —

A heart that, firm as some embattled tower,
  Itself for her, her in itself reveres,
For her rejoices in its lasting power,
  Conscious alone, when she herself appears;
Feels itself freer in so sweet a thrall,
And only beats to give her thanks in all.

The power of loving, and all yearning sighs
  For love responsive were effaced and drowned;
While longing hope for joyous enterprise
  Was formed, and rapid action straightway found
If love can e'er a loving one inspire,
Most lovingly it gave me now its fire;

And 'twas through *her!*—an inward sorrow lay
  On soul and body, heavily oppressed;
To mournful phantoms was my sight a prey,
  In the drear void of a sad tortured breast;
Now on the well-known threshold Hope hath smiled,
Herself appeareth in the sunlight mild.

Unto the peace of God, which, as we read,
  Blesseth us more than reason e'er hath done,
Love's happy peace would I compare indeed,
  When in the presence of the dearest one.
There rests the heart, and there the sweetest thought,
The thought of being hers is checked by naught.

In the pure bosom doth a yearning float,
  Unto a holier, purer, unknown Being
Its grateful aspirations to devote,
  The Ever-Nameless then unriddled seeing;
We call it: piety!—such blest delight
I feel a share in, when before her sight.

Before her sight, as 'neath the sun's hot ray,
  Before her breath, as 'neath the spring's soft wind,
In its deep wintry cavern melts away
  Self-love, so long in icy chains confined;
No selfishness and no self-will are nigh,
For at her advent they were forced to fly.

It seems as though she said: "As hours pass by
  They spread before us life with kindly plan;
Small knowledge did the yesterday supply,
  To know the morrow is concealed from man;
And if the thought of evening made me start,
The sun at setting gladdened straight my heart.

"Act, then, as I, and look, with joyous mind,
  The moment in the face; nor linger thou!
Meet it with speed, so fraught with life, so kind
  In action, and in love so radiant now;

Let all things be where thou art, childlike ever,
Thus thou'lt be all, thus thou'lt be vanquished never.

Thou speakest well, methought, for as thy guide
The moment's favor did a god assign,
And each one feels himself, when by thy side,
Fate's favorite in a moment so divine;
I tremble at thy look that bids me go,
Why should I care such wisdom vast to know?

Now am I far! And what would best befit
The present minute? I could scarcely tell;
Full many a rich possession offers it,
These but offend, and I would fain repel.
Yearnings unquenchable still drive me on,
All counsel, save unbounded tears, is gone.

Flow on, flow on in never-ceasing course,
Yet may ye never quench my inward fire!
Within my bosom heaves a mighty force,
Where death and life contend in combat dire.
Medicines may serve the body's pangs to still;
Naught but the spirit fails in strength of will, —

Fails in conception; wherefore fails it so?
A thousand times her image it portrays;
Enchanting now, and now compelled to go,
Now indistinct, now clothed in purest rays!
How could the smallest comfort here be flowing?
The ebb and flood, the coming and the going!

. . . . . .

Leave me here now, my life's companions true!
Leave me alone on rock, in moor and heath;
But courage! open lies the world to you,
The glorious heavens above, the earth beneath;
Observe, investigate, with searching eyes,
And nature will disclose her mysteries.

To me is all, I to myself am lost,
Who the immortals' favorite erst was thought;
They, tempting, sent Pandoras to my cost,
So rich in wealth, with danger far more fraught;
They urged me to those lips, with rapture crowned,
Deserted me, and hurled me to the ground.

III. ATONEMENT.

[Composed, when seventy-four years old, for a Polish lady, who excelled in playing on the pianoforte.

Passion brings reason, — who can pacify
An anguished heart whose loss hath been so great?
Where are the hours that fled so swiftly by?
In vain the fairest thou didst gain from Fate;
Sad is the soul, confused the enterprise;
The glorious world, how on the sense it dies!

In million tones entwined for evermore
Music with angel-pinions hovers there,
To pierce man's being to its inmost core,
Eternal beauty as its fruit to bear;
The eye grows moist, in yearnings blest reveres
The godlike worth of music as of tears.

And so the lightened heart soon learns to see
That it still lives, and beats, and ought to beat,
Offering itself with joy and willingly,
In grateful payment for a gift so sweet.
And then was felt, — oh, may it constant prove! —
The twofold bliss of music and of love.

◆

The remembrance of the Good
Keep us ever glad in mood.

The remembrance of the Fair
Makes a mortal rapture share.

The remembrance of one's Love
Blest is, if it constant prove.

The remembrance of the One
Is the greatest joy that's known.

◆

[Written at the age of seventy-seven.]

When I was still a youthful wight,
So full of enjoyment and merry,
The painters used to assert, in spite,
That my features were small — yes, very;
Yet then full many a beauteous child
With true affection upon me smiled.

Now as a graybeard I sit here in state,
By street and by lane held in awe, sirs;
And may be seen, like old Frederick the Great,
On pipebowls, on cups, and on saucers.
Yet the beauteous maidens, they keep afar;
Oh, vision of youth! Oh, golden star!

◆

FOREVER.

The happiness that man, whilst prisoned here,
Is wont with heavenly rapture to compare, —
The harmony of Truth, from wavering clear, —
Of Friendship that is free from doubting care, —
The light which in stray thoughts alone can cheer
The wise, — the bard alone in visions fair, —
In my best hours I found in *her* all this,
And made mine own, to mine exceeding bliss.

◆

LINES ON SEEING SCHILLER'S SKULL.

[This curious imitation of the ternary metre of Dante was written at the age of seventy-seven.]

Within a gloomy charnel-house one day
I viewed the countless skulls, so strangely mated,
And of old times I thought that now were gray.
Close packed they stand that once so fiercely hated,
And hardy bones that to the death contended,
Are lying crossed, — to lie forever, fated.
What held those crooked shoulder-blades suspended?
No one now asks; and limbs with vigor fired,
The hand, the foot — their use in life is ended.
Vainly ye sought the tomb for rest when tired;
Peace in the grave may not be yours; ye're driven
Back into daylight by a force inspired;
But none can love the withered husk, though even
A glorious noble kernel it containèd.
To me, an adept, was the writing given
Which not to all its holy sense explainèd.
When 'mid the crowd, their icy shadows flinging,
I saw a form that glorious still remainèd,
And even there, where mould and damp were clinging.
Gave me a blest, a rapture-fraught emotion,
As though from death a living fount were springing.

What mystic joy I felt! What rapt devotion!
That form, how pregnant with a godlike trace!
A look, how did it whirl me toward that ocean
Whose rolling billows mightier shapes embrace!
Mysterious vessel! Oracle how dear!
Even to grasp thee is my hand too base,
Except to steal thee from thy prison here
With pious purpose, and devoutly go
Back to the air, free thoughts, and sunlight clear.
What greater gain in life can man e'er know
Than when God-Nature will to him explain
How into Spirit steadfastness may flow,
How steadfast, too, the Spirit-Born remain.

ROYAL PRAYER.

Ha, I am the lord of earth! The noble,
Who're in my service, love me.
Ha, I am the lord of earth! The noble,
O'er whom my sway extendeth, love I.
Oh, grant me, God in Heaven, that I may ne'er
Dispense with loftiness and love!

HUMAN FEELINGS.

Ah, ye gods! ye great immortals
In the spacious heavens above us!
Would ye on this earth but give us
Steadfast minds and dauntless courage
We, oh, kindly ones, would leave you
All your spacious heavens above us!

ON THE DIVAN.

He who knows himself and others
Here will also see,
That the East and West, like brothers,
Parted ne'er shall be.

Thoughtfully to float forev
'Tween two worlds, be man's endeavor!
So between the East and West
To revolve, be my behest!

EXPLANATION OF AN ANCIENT WOODCUT,

REPRESENTING

HANS SACHS' POETICAL MISSION.

[I feel considerable hesitation in venturing to offer this version of a poem which Carlyle describes to be "a beautiful piece (a very *Hans Sachs' beatified*, both in character and style), which we wish there was any possibility of translating." The reader will be aware that Hans Sachs was the celebrated Minstrel-Cobbler of Nuremberg, who wrote 208 plays, 1,700 comic tales, and between 4,000 and 5,000 lyric poems. He flourished throughout almost the whole of the 16th century.]

Early within his workshop here,
On Sundays stands our master dear;
His dirty apron he puts away,
And wears a cleanly doublet to-day;
Lets waxed thread, hammer, and pincers rest,
And lays his awl within his chest;
The seventh day he takes repose
From many pulls and many blows.

Soon as the spring-sun meets his view,
Repose begets him labor anew;
He feels that he holds within his brain
A little world that broods there amain,
And that begins to act and to live,
Which he unto others would gladly give.

He had a skilful eye and true,
And was full kind and loving, too.
For contemplation, clear and pure,—
For making all his own again, sure;
He had a tongue that charmed when 'twas heard,
And graceful and light flowed every word;
Which made the Muses in him rejoice,
The Master-singer of their choice.

And now a maiden entered there,
With swelling breast, and body fair;
With footing firm she took her place,
And moved with stately, noble grace;

She did not walk in wanton mood,
Nor look around with glances lewd.
She held a measure in her hand,
Her girdle was a golden band,

A wreath of corn was on her head,
Her eye the day's bright lustre shed;
Her name is honest Industry,
Else, Justice, Magnanimity.

She entered with a kindly greeting;
He felt no wonder at the meeting,
For, kind and fair as she might be,
He long had known her, fancied he.

"I have selected thee," she said,
"From all who earth's wild mazes tread,
That thou shouldst have clear-sighted sense,
And naught that's wrong should e'er commence.
When others run in strange confusion,
Thy gaze shall see through each illusion;
When others dolefully complain,
Thy cause with jesting thou shalt gain,
Honor and right shall value duly,
In everything act simply, truly, —
Virtue and godliness proclaim,
And call all evil by its name,
Naught soften down, attempt no quibble,
Naught polish up, naught vainly scribble.
The world shall stand before thee, then,
As seen by Albert Durer's ken,
In manliness and changeless life,
In inward strength and firmness rife.
Fair Nature's Genius by the hand
Shall lead thee on through every land,
Teach thee each different life to scan,
Show thee the wondrous ways of man,
His shifts, confusions, thrustings, drubbings,
Pushings, tearings, pressings, and rubbings;
The varying madness of the crew,
The ant-hill's ravings bring to view;
But thou shalt see all this expressed,
As though 'twere in a magic chest.
Write these things down for folks on earth,
In hopes they may to wit give birth." —
Then she a window opened wide,
And showed a motley crowd outside,

All kinds of beings 'neath the sky,
As in his writings one may spy.

Our master dear was after this,
On nature thinking, full of bliss,
When toward him, from the other side
He saw an agèd woman glide;
The name she bears, Historia,
Mythologia, Fabula;
With footstep tottering and unstable
She dragged a large and wooden carved table,
Where, with wide sleeves and human mien.
The Lord was catechizing seen;
Adam, Eve, Eden, the Serpent's seduction,
Gomorrah and Sodom's awful destruction,
The twelve illustrious women, too,
That mirror of honor brought to view;
All kinds of bloodthirstiness, murder, and sin,
The twelve wicked tyrants also were in,
And all kinds of goodly doctrine and law;
Saint Peter with his scourge you saw,
With the world's ways dissatisfied,
And by our Lord with power supplied.
Her train and dress, behind and before,
And e'en the seams, were painted o'er
With tales of worldly virtue and crime.—
Our master viewed all this for a time;
The sight right gladly he surveyed,
So useful for him in his trade,
Whence he was able to procure
Example good and precept sure,
Recounting all with truthful care,
As though he had been present there.
His spirit seemed from earth to fly,
He ne'er had turned away his eye,
Did he not just behind him hear
A rattle of bells approaching near.

And now a fool doth catch his eye,
With goat and ape's leap drawing nigh,
A merry interlude preparing
With fooleries and jests unsparing.

Behind him in a line drawn out,
He dragged all fools, the lean and stout,
The great and little, the empty and full,
All too witty, and all too dull,
A lash he flourished overhead,
As though a dance of apes he led,
Abusing them with bitterness,
As though his wrath would ne'er grow less.

While on this sight our master gazed,
His head was growing well nigh crazed:
What words for all could he e'er find,
Could such a medley be combined?
Could he continue with delight
For evermore to sing and write?
When lo! from out a cloud's dark bed
In at the upper window sped
The Muse, in all her majesty,
As fair as our loved maids we see.
With clearness she around him threw
Her truth, that ever stronger grew.

"I, to ordain thee come," she spake:
"So prosper, and my blessing take!
The holy fire that slumbering lies
Within thee, in bright flames shall rise;
Yet that thine ever-restless life
May still with kindly strength be rife,
I, for thine inward spirit's calm,
Have granted nourishment and balm,
That rapture may thy soul imbue,
Like some fair blossom bathed in dew."—

Behind his house then secretly
Outside the dorway pointed she,
Where in a shady garden-nook
A beauteous maid with downcast look
Was sitting where a stream was flowing,
With elder bushes near it growing,
She sat beneath an apple tree,
And naught around her seemed to see.
Her lap was full of roses fair,
Which in a wreath she twined with care,

And with them leaves and blossoms blended:
For whom was that sweet wreath intended?
Thus sat she, modest and retired,
Her bosom throbbed, with hope inspired;
Such deep forebodings filled her mind,
No room for wishing could she find,
And with the thoughts that o'er it flew,
Perchance a sigh was mingled, too.

"But why should sorrow cloud thy brow?
That, dearest love, which fills thee now
Is fraught with joy and ecstasy,
Prepared in one alone for thee,
That he within thine eye may find
Solace when fortune proves unkind,
And be new-born through many a kiss.
That he receives with inward bliss;
Whene'er he clasps thee to his breast,
May he from all his toils find rest.
When he in thy dear arms shall sink,
May he new life and vigor drink:
Fresh joys of youth shalt thou obtain,
In merry jest rejoice again.
With raillery and roguish spite,
Thou now shalt tease him, now delight.
Thus Love will nevermore grow old.
Thus will the minstrel ne'er be cold."

While he thus lives, in secret blessed,
Above him in the clouds doth rest
An oak-wreath, verdant and sublime,
Placed on his brow in after-time;
While they are banished to the slough,
Who their great master disavow.

◆

THE FRIENDLY MEETING.

In spreading mantle to my chin concealed,
  I trod the rocky path so steep and gray,
  Then to the wintry plain I bent my way
Uneasily, to flight my bosom steeled.

But sudden was the new-born day revealed
  A maiden came, in heavenly bright array,
  Like the fair creatures of the poet's lay
In realms of song. My yearning heart was healed!

Yet turned I thence, till she had onward passed,
  While closer still the folds to draw I tried,
    As though with heat self-kindled to grow warm;
But followed her. She stood. The die was cast!
  No more within my mantle could I hide;
    I threw it off, — she lay within mine arm.

◆

IN A WORD.

Thus to be chained forever, can I bear?
  A very torment that, in truth, would be.
  This very day my new resolve shall see, —
I'll not go near the lately worshipped Fair.

Yet what excuse, my heart, can I prepare
  In such a case, for not consulting thee?
  But courage! while our sorrows utter we
In tones where love, grief, gladness have a share.

But see! the minstrel's bidding to obey,
  Its melody pours forth the sounding lyre,
    Yearning a sacrifice of love to bring.
Scarce would'st thou think it — ready is the lay;
  Well, but what then? Methought in the first fire
    We to her presence flew, that lay to sing.

◆

THE MAIDEN SPEAKS.

How grave thou lookest, loved one! wherefore so?
  Thy marble image seems a type of thee;
  Like it, no sign of life thou givest me;
Compared with thee, the stone appears to glow.

Behind his shield in ambush lurks the foe,
  The friend's brow all unruffled we should see.
  I seek thee, but thou seekest away to flee;
Fixed as this sculptured figure, learn to grow!

Tell me, to which should I the preference pay?
Must I from both with coldness meet alone?
The one is lifeless, thou with life art blest.
In short, no longer to throw words away,
I'll fondly kiss and kiss and kiss this stone,
Till thou dost tear me hence with envious breast.

◆

GROWTH.

O'er field and plain, in childhood's artless days,
Thou sprangest with me on many a spring-morn fair.
"For such a daughter, with what pleasing care,
Would I, as father, happy dwellings raise?"

And when thou on the world didst cast thy gaze,
Thy joy was then in household toils to share.
"Why did I trust her, why she trust me e'er?
For such a sister, how I Heaven should praise!"

Nothing can now the beauteous growth retard;
Love's glowing flame within my breast is fanned.
Shall I embrace her form, my grief to end?
Thee as a queen must I, alas, regard:
So high above me placed thou seemest to stand;
Before a passing look I meekly bend.

◆

FOOD IN TRAVEL.

If to her eyes' bright lustre I were blind,
No longer would they serve my life to gild.
The will of destiny must be fulfilled, —
This knowing, I withdrew with saddened mind,

No further happiness I now could find;
The former longings of my heart were stilled,
I sought her looks alone, whereon to build
My joy in life — all else was left behind.

Wine's genial glow, the festal banquet gay,
Ease, sleep, and friends, all wonted pleasures glad
I spurned, till little there remained to prove,
Now calmly through the world I wend my way:
That which I crave may everywhere be had,
With me I bring the one thing needful — love.

DEPARTURE.

With many a thousand kiss not yet content,
At length with one kiss I was forced to go;
After that bitter parting's depth of woe,
I deemed the shore from which my steps I bent,

Its hills, streams, dwellings, mountains, as I went,
A pledge of joy, till daylight ceased to glow;
Then on my sight did blissful visions glow;
In the dim-lighted, distant firmament.

And when at length the sea confined my gaze,
My ardent longing filled my heart once more;
What I had lost unwillingly I sought.
Then Heaven appeared to shed its kindly rays;
Methought that all I had possessed of yore
Remained still mine — that I was reft of naught.

THE LOVING ONE WRITES.

The look that thy sweet eyes on mine impress,
The pledge thy lips to mine convey, — the kiss, —
He who, like me, hath knowledge sure of this,
Can he in aught beside find happiness?

Removed from thee, friend-severed, in distress,
These thoughts I vainly struggle to dismiss;
They still return to that one hour of bliss,
The only one; then tears my grief confess.

But unawares the tear makes haste to dry:
He loves, methinks, e'en to those glades so still, —
And shalt not thou to distant lands extend?
Receive the murmurs of this loving sigh;
My only joy on earth is in thy will,
Thy kindly will tow'rd me; a token send!

◆

Lovingly I'll sing of love;
Ever comes she from above.

THE LOVING ONE ONCE MORE.

Why do I o'er my paper once more bend?
  Ask not too closely, dearest one, I pray:
  For, to speak truth, I've nothing now to say;
Yet to thy hands at length 'twill come, dear friend.

Since I can come not with it, what I send
  My undivided heart shall now convey,
  With all its joys, hopes, pleasures, pains, to-day:
All this hath no beginning, hath no end.

Henceforward I may ne'er to thee confide
  How, far as thought, wish, fancy, will, can reach,
    My faithful heart with thine is surely blended.
Thus stood I once enraptured by thy side,
  Gazed on thee, and said naught. What need of speech?
    My very being itself was ended.

◆

THE DOUBTERS AND THE LOVERS.

THE DOUBTERS.

Ye love, and sonnets write! Fate's strange behest!
  The heart, its hidden meaning to declare,
  Must seek for rhymes, uniting pair with pair:
Learn, children, that the will is weak, at best.

Scarcely with freedom the o'erflowing breast
  As yet can speak, and well may it beware;
  Tempestuous passions sweep each chord that's there,
Then once more sink to night and gentle rest.

Why vex yourselves and us, the heavy stone
  Up the steep path but step by step to roll?
    It falls again, and ye ne'er cease to strive.

THE LOVERS.

But we are on the proper road alone!
  If gladly is to thaw the frozen soul,
    The fire of love must aye be kept alive

SHE CANNOT END.

When unto thee I sent the page all white,
Instead of first thereon inscribing aught,
The space thou doubtless filledst up in sport,
And sent it me to make my joy grow bright.

As soon as the blue cover met my sight,
As well becomes a woman, quick as thought
I tore it open, leaving hidden naught,
And read the well-known words of pure delight:

My only being! Dearest heart! Sweet child!
How kindly thou my yearning then didst still
With gentle words, enthralling me to thee.
In truth methought I read thy whispers mild
Wherewith thou lovingly my soul didst fill,
E'en to myself for aye ennobling me.

NEMESIS.

When through the nations stalks contagion wild,
We from them cautiously should steal away,
E'en I have oft with ling'ring and delay
Shunned many an influence, not to be defiled.

And e'en though Amor oft my hours beguiled,
At length with him preferred I not to play,
And so, too, with the wretched sons of clay,
When four and three-lined verses they compiled.

But punishment pursues the scoffer straight,
As if by serpent-torch of furies led
From hill to vale, from land to sea to fly.
I hear the genie's laughter at my fate;
Yet do I find all power of thinking fled
In sonnet-rage and love's fierce ecstasy.

THE CHRISTMAS-BOX.

This box, mine own sweet darling, thou wilt find
With many a varied sweetmeat's form supplied;
The fruits are they of holy Christmas tide,
But baked, indeed, for children's use designed.

I'd fain, in speeches sweet with skill combined,
Poetic sweetmeats for the feast provide;
But why in such frivolities confide?
Perish the thought, with flattery to blind!

One sweet thing there is still, that from within,
Within us speaks, — that may be felt afar;
This may be wafted o'er to thee alone.
If thou a recollection fond canst win,
As if with pleasure gleamed each well-known star,
The smallest gift thou never wilt disown.

◆

THE WARNING.

When sounds the trumpet at the Judgment Day,
And when forever all things earthly die,
We must a full and true account supply
Of ev'ry useless word we dropped in play.

But what effect will all the words convey
Wherein with eager zeal and lovingly,
That I might win thy favor, labored I,
If on thine ear alone they die away?

Therefore, sweet love, thy conscience bear in mind,
Remember well how long thou hast delayed,
So that the world such sufferings may not know.
If I must reckon, and excuses find
For all things useless I to thee have said,
To a full year the Judgment Day will grow.

◆

THE EPOCHS.

On Petrarch's heart, all other days before,
In flaming letters written, was impressed
Good Friday. And on mine, be it confessed,
Is this year's Advent, as it passeth o'er.

I do not now begin, — I *still* adore
Her whom I early cherished in my breast,
Then once again with prudence dispossessed,
And to whose heart I'm driven back once more.

The love of Petrarch, that all glorious love,
Was unrequited, and, alas, full sad;
One long Good Friday 'twas, one heartache drear;
But may my mistress' Advent ever prove,
With its palm-jubilee, so sweet and glad,
One endless Mayday, through the livelong year!

◆

CHARADE.

Two words there are, both short, of beauty rare,
Whose sounds our lips so often love to frame,
But which with clearness never can proclaim
The things whose own peculiar stamp they bear.

'Tis well in days of age and youth so fair,
One on the other boldly to inflame;
And if those words together linked we name,
A blissful rapture we discover there.

But now to give them pleasure do I seek,
And in myself my happiness would find;
I hope in silence, but I hope for this:
Gently, as loved one's names, those words to speak,
To see them both within one image shrined,
Both in one being to embrace with bliss.

◆

TO ORIGINALS.

A FELLOW says: "I own no school or college;
No master lives whom I acknowledge;
And pray, don't entertain the thought
That from the dead I e'er learnt aught."
This, if I rightly understand,
Means: "I'm a blockhead at first hand."

◆

THE SOLDIER'S CONSOLATION.

No! in truth there's here no lack:
White the bread, the maidens black!
To another town, next night,
Black the bread, the maidens white!

GENIAL IMPULSE.

Thus roll I, never taking ease,
My tub, like Saint Diogenes,
Now serious am, now seek to please,
Now love and hate in turns one sees;
The motives now are those, now these;
Now nothings, now realities.
Thus roll I, never taking ease,
My tub, like Saint Diogenes.

◆

NEITHER THIS NOR THAT.

If thou to be a slave shouldst will,
Thou'lt get no pity, but fare ill;
And if a master thou wouldst be,
The world will view it angrily;
And if in *statu quo* thou stay,
That thou art but a fool they'll say.

◆

THE WAY TO BEHAVE.

Though tempers are bad, and peevish folks swear,
Remember to ruffle thy brows, friend, ne'er;
And let not the fancies of women so fair
E'er serve thy pleasure in life to impair.

◆

THE BEST.

When head and heart are busy, say,
  What better can be found?
Who neither loves nor goes astray,
  Were better under ground.

◆

AS BROAD AS IT'S LONG.

Modest men must needs endure,
  And the bold must humbly bow;
Thus thy fate's the same, be sure,
  Whether bold or modest thou.

THE RULE OF LIFE.

If thou wouldst live unruffled by care,
Let not the past torment thee e'er;
As little as possible be thou annoyed,
And let the present be ever enjoyed;
Ne'er let thy breast with hate be supplied,
And to God the future confide.

◆

THE SAME, EXPANDED.

If thou wouldst live unruffled by care,
Let not the past torment thee e'er;
If any loss thou hast to rue,
Act as though thou wert born anew;
Inquire the meaning of each day,
What each day means, itself will say;
In thine own actions take thy pleasure,
What others do thou'lt duly treasure;
Ne'er let thy breast with hate be supplied,
And to God the future confide.

◆

CALM AT SEA.

Silence deep rules o'er the waters,
  Calmly slumbering lies the main
While the sailor views with trouble
  Naught but one vast level plain.

Not a zephyr is in motion!
  Silence fearful as the grave!
In the mighty waste of ocean
  Sunk to rest is every wave.

◆

If wealth is gone, — then something is gone!
  Quick, make up thy mind,
  And fresh wealth find,
If honor is gone, — then much is gone!
    Seek glory to find,
    And people then will alter their mind.
If courage is gone, — then all is gone!
'Twere better that thou hadst never been born.

THE PROSPEROUS VOYAGE.

The mist is fast clearing,
And radiant is heaven,
Whilst Æolus loosens
Our anguish-fraught bond.
The zephyrs are sighing,
Alert is the sailor.
Quick! nimbly be plying!
The billows are riven,
The distance approaches;
I see land beyond!

◆

COURAGE.

Carelessly over the plain away,
Where by the boldest man no path
Cut before thee thou canst discern,
Make for thyself a path!

Silence, loved one, my heart!
Cracking, let it not break!
Breaking, break not with thee!

◆

ADMONITION.

Wherefore ever ramble on
  For the Good is lying near.
Fortune learn to seize alone,
  For that Fortune's ever here.

◆

MY ONLY PROPERTY.

I feel that I'm possessed of naught,
Saving the free unfettered thought
  Which from my bosom seeks to flow,
And each propitious passing hour
That suffers me in all its power
  A loving fate with truth to know.

◆

May each honest effort be
Crowned with lasting constancy.

OLD AGE.

Old age is courteous — no one more:
For time after time he knocks at the door,
But nobody says, "Walk in, sir, pray!"
Yet turns he not from the door away,
But lifts the latch, and enters with speed,
And then they cry "A cool one, indeed!"

◆

EPITAPH.

As a boy, reserved and naughty;
As a youth, a coxcomb and haughty;
As a man, for action inclined;
As a graybeard, fickle in mind.
Upon thy grave will people read:
This was a very man, indeed!

◆

RULE FOR MONARCHS.

If men are never their thoughts to employ,
Take care to provide them a life full of joy;
But if to some profit and use thou wouldst bend them,
Take care to shear them, and then defend them.

◆

PAULO POST FUTURI.

Weep ye not, ye children dear,
  That as yet ye are unborn:
For each sorrow and each tear
  Makes the father's heart to mourn.
Patient be a short time to it,
  Unproduced, and known to none;
If your father cannot do it,
  By your mother 'twill be done.

◆

He who with life makes sport,
  Can prosper never;
Who rules himself in naught,
  Is a slave ever.

THE FOOL'S EPILOGUE.

Many good works I've done and ended,
Ye take the praise — I'm not offended;
For in the world, I've always thought
Each thing its true position hath sought.
When praised for foolish deeds am I,
I set off laughing heartily;
When blamed for doing something good,
I take it in an easy mood.
If some one stronger gives me hard blows,
That it's a jest, I feign to suppose;
But if 'tis one that's but my own like,
I know the way such folks to strike.
When Fortune smiles, I merry grow,
And sing *in dulci jubilo;*
When sinks her wheel, and tumbles me o'er,
I think 'tis sure to rise once more.

In the sunshine of summer I ne'er lament,
Because the winter it cannot prevent;
And when the white snowflakes fall around,
I don my skates, and am off with a bound.
Though I dissemble as I will,
The sun for me will ne'er stand still;
The old and wonted course is run,
Until the whole of life is done;
Each day the servant like the lord,
In turns comes home, and goes abroad;
If proud or humble the line they take,
They all must eat, drink, sleep, and wake.
So nothing ever vexes me;
Act like the fool, and wise ye'll be!

◆

AUTHORS.

Over the meadows, and down the stream,
  And through the garden-walks straying,
He plucks the flowers that fairest seem;
  His throbbing heart brooks no delaying.
His maiden then comes — oh, what ecstasy!
Thy flowers thou givest for one glance of her eye!

The gard'ner next door o'er the hedge sees the youth:
"I'm not such a fool as that, in good truth;
My pleasure is ever to cherish each flower,
And see that no birds my fruit e'er devour.
But when 'tis ripe, your money, good neighbor!
'Twas not for nothing I took all this labor!"

And such, methinks, are the author-tribe.
  The one his pleasures around him strews,
  That his friends, the public, may reap, if they choose;
The other would fain make them all subscribe.

◆

CAT-PIE.

While *he* is marked by vision clear
  Who fathoms Nature's treasures,
The man may follow, void of fear,
  Who her proportions measures.

Though for one mortal, it is true,
  These trades may both be fitted,
Yet, that the things themselves are *two*
  Must always be admitted.

Once on a time there lived a cook
  Whose skill was past disputing,
Who in his head a fancy took
  To try his luck at shooting.

So, gun in hand, he sought a spot
  Where stores of game were breeding,
And there ere long a cat he shot
  That on young birds was feeding.

This cat he fancied was a hare,
  Forming a judgment hasty,
So served it up for people's fare
  Well-spiced, and in a pasty.

Yet many a guest with wrath was filled
  (All who had noses tender):
The cat that's by the sportsman killed
  No cook a hare can render.

JOY.

A dragon-fly with beauteous wing
Is hovering o'er a silvery spring;
I watch its motions with delight,—
Now dark its colors seem, now bright.
Chameleon-like appears now blue,
Now red, and now of greenish hue.
Would it would come still nearer me,
That I its tints might better see!

It hovers, flutters, resting ne'er!
  But, hush! it settles on the mead.
I have it safe now, I declare!
    And when its form I closely view,
    'Tis of a sad and dingy blue—
  Such, Joy-Dissector, is thy case, indeed!

◆

EXPLANATION OF AN ANTIQUE GEM.

A young fig-tree its form lifts high
  Within a beauteous garden;
And see, a goat is sitting by,
  As if he were its warden.

But, oh, Quirites, how one errs!
  The tree is guarded badly;
For round the other side there whirrs
  And hums a beetle madly.

The hero with his well-mailed coat
  Nibbles the branches tall so;
A mighty longing feels the goat
  Gently to climb up also.

And so, my friends, ere long ye see
  The tree all leafless standing;
It looks a type of misery,
  Help of the gods demanding.

Then listen, ye ingenuous youth,
  Who hold wise saws respected:
From he-goat and from beetle's-tooth
  A tree should be protected!

LEGEND.

THERE lived in the desert a holy man
To whom a goat-footed Faun one day
Paid a visit, and thus began
To his surprise: "I entreat thee to pray
That grace to me and my friends may be given,
That we may be able to mount to Heaven,
For great is our thirst for heavenly bliss."
The holy man made answer to this:
"Much danger is lurking in thy petition,
Nor will it be easy to gain admission;
Thou dost not come with an angel's salute;
For I see thou wearest a cloven foot."
The wild man paused, and then answered he:
"What doth my goat's foot matter to thee?
Full many I've known into heaven to pass
Straight and with ease, with the head of an ass!"

◆

THE WRANGLER.

ONE day a shameless and impudent wight
Went into a shop full of steel wares bright,
Arranged with art upon every shelf.
He fancied they all were meant for himself;
And so, while the patient owner stood by,
The shining goods needs must handle and try,
And valued, — for how should a fool better know? —
The bad things high, and the good ones low,
And all with an easy self-satisfied face;
Then, having bought nothing, he left the place.

The tradesman now felt sorely vexed,
So when the fellow went there next,
A lock of steel made quite red hot.
The other cried upon the spot:
"Such wares as these, who'd ever buy?
The steel is tarnished shamefully," —
Then pulled it, like a fool, about,
But soon set up a piteous shout.
"Pray what's the matter?" the shopman spoke;
The other replied: "Faith, a very cool joke!"

THE CRITIC.

I HAD a fellow as my guest,
Not knowing he was such a pest,
And gave him just my usual fare;
He ate his fill of what was there,
And for a dessert my best things swallowed,
Soon as his meal was o'er, what followed?
Led by the Deuce, to a neighbor he went,
And talked of my food to his heart's content:
"The soup might surely have had more spice,
The meat was ill-browned, and the wine wasn't nice."
A thousand curses alight on his head!
'Tis a critic, I vow! Let the dog be struck dead!

THE YELPERS.

OUR rides in all directions bend,
For business or for pleasure,
Yet yelpings on our steps attend,
And barkings without measure.
The dog that in our stable dwells,
After our heels is striding,
And all the while his noisy yells
But show that we are riding.

THE STORK'S VOCATION.

THE stork who worms and frogs devours
That in our ponds reside,
Why should he dwell on high church towers,
With which he's not allied?

Incessantly he chatters there,
And gives our ears no rest;
But neither old nor young can dare
To drive him from his nest.

I humbly ask it, — how can he
Give of his title proof,
Save by his happy tendency
To sell the church's roof?

THE DILETTANTE AND THE CRITIC.

A boy a pigeon once possessed,
In gay and brilliant plumage dressed;
He loved it well, and in boyish sport
Its food to take from his mouth he taught,
And in his pigeon he took such pride.
That his joy to others he needs must confide.

An agèd fox near the place chanced to dwell,
Talkative, clever, and learned as well;
The boy his society used to prize,
Hearing with pleasure his wonders and lies.

"My friend the fox my pigeon must see!"
He ran, and stretched 'mongst the bushes lay he.
"Look, fox, at my pigeon, my pigeon so fair!
His equal I'm sure thou hast looked upon ne'er!"

"Let's see!" — The boy gave it. — "'Tis really not bad;
And yet, it is far from complete, I must add.
The feathers, for instance, how short! 'Tis absurd!"
So he set to work straightway to pluck the poor bird.

The boy screamed. — "Thou must now stronger pinions supply,
Or else 'twill be ugly, unable to fly."
Soon 'twas stripped — oh, the villain! — and torn all to pieces.
The boy was heartbroken, — and so my tale ceases.

. . . . .

He who sees in the boy shadowed forth his own case,
Should be on his guard 'gainst the fox's whole race.

POETRY.

God to his untaught children sent
Law, order, knowledge, art, from high,
And every heavenly favor lent,
The world's hard lot to qualify.
They knew not how they should behave,
For all from Heaven stark-naked came;
But Poetry their garments gave,
And then not one had cause for shame.

CELEBRITY.

[A satire on his own *Sorrows of Werther.*]

On bridges small and bridges great
Stand Nepomucks in every state,
Of bronze, wood, painted, or of stone,
Some small as dolls, some giants grown;
Each passer must worship before Nepomuck,
Who to die on a bridge chanced to have the ill-luck.
When once a man with head and ears
A saint in people's eyes appears,
Or has been sentenced piteously
Beneath the hangman's hand to die,
He's as a noted person prized,
In portrait is immortalized.
Engravings, woodcuts, are supplied,
And through the world spread far and wide
Upon them all is seen his name,
And every one admits his claim;
Even the image of the Lord
Is not with greater zeal adored.
Strange fancy of the human race!
Half sinner frail, half child of grace,
We see Herr Werther of the story
In all the pomp of woodcut glory.
His worth is first made duly known,
By having his sad features shown
At every fair the country round;
In every alehouse, too, they're found.
His stick is pointed by each dunce;
"The ball would reach his brain at once!"
And each says, o'er his beer and bread:
"Thank Heaven, that 'tis not *we* are dead!"

◆

PLAYING AT PRIESTS.

Within a town where parity
According to old form we see,—
That is to say, where Catholic
And Protestant no quarrels pick,
And where, as in his father's day,
Each worships God in his own way,

We Lutheran children used to dwell,
By songs and sermons taught as well.
The Catholic cling-clang in truth
Sounded more pleasing to our youth,
For all that we encountered there,
To us seemed varied, joyous, fair.
As children, monkeys, and mankind
To ape each other are inclined,
We soon, the time to while away,
A game at priests resolved to play.
Their aprons all our sisters lent
For copes, which gave us great content;
And handkerchiefs embroidered o'er,
Instead of stoles we also wore;
Gold paper, whereon beasts were traced,
The bishop's brow as mitre graced.

Through house and garden thus in state
We strutted early, strutted late,
Repeating with all proper unction,
Incessantly each holy function,
The best was wanting to the game;
  We knew that a sonorous ring
  Was here a most important thing;
But fortune to our rescue came,
For on the ground a halter lay;
  We were delighted, and at once
  Made it a bell-rope for the nonce,
And kept it moving all the day;
  In turns each sister and each brother
  Acted as sexton to another;
All helped to swell the joyous throng;
  The whole proceeded swimmingly,
  And since no actual bell had we,
We all in chorus sang, Ding dong!

. . . . . .

Our guileless child's-sport long was hushed
  In memory's tomb, like some old lay;
And yet across my mind it rushed
  With pristine force the other day.
The New-Poetic Catholics
In every point its aptness fix!

SONGS.

Songs are like painted window-panes!
In darkness wrapped the church remains,
If from the market-place we view it;
Thus sees the ignoramus through it.
No wonder that he deems it tame,—
And all his life 'twill be the same.

But let us now inside repair,
And greet the holy chapel there!
At once the whole seems clear and bright,
Each ornament is bathed in light,
And fraught with meaning to the sight.
God's children! thus your fortune prize,
Be edified, and feast your eyes!

◆

A PARABLE.

I picked a rustic nosegay lately,
And bore it homewards, musing greatly;
When, heated by my hand, I found
The heads all drooping toward the ground.
I placed them in a well-cooled glass,
And what a wonder came to pass!
The heads soon raised themselves once more,
The stalks were blooming as before,
And all were in as good a case
As when they left their native place.

. . . . .

So felt I, when I wondering heard
My song to foreign tongues transferred.

◆

SHOULD E'ER THE LOVELESS DAY.

Should e'er the loveless day remain
Obscured by storms of hail and rain,
  Thy charms thou showest never;
I tap at window, tap at door:
Come, loved one, come! appear once more!
  Thou art as fair as ever!

A PLAN THE MUSES ENTERTAINED.

A plan the Muses entertained
Methodically to impart
To Psyche the poetic art;
Prosaic-pure her soul remained,
No wondrous sounds escaped her lyre
E'en in the fairest Summer night;
But Amor came with glance of fire,—
The lesson soon was learned aright.

◆

THE DEATH OF THE FLY.

With eagerness he drinks the treacherous potion,
Nor stops to rest, by the first taste misled;
Sweet is the draught, but soon all power of motion
He finds has from his tender members fled;
No longer has he strength to plume his wing,
No longer strength to raise his head, poor thing!
E'en in enjoyment's hour his life he loses,
His little foot to bear his weight refuses;
So on he sips, and ere his draught is o'er,
Death veils his thousand eyes for evermore.

◆

BY THE RIVER.

When by the broad stream thou dost dwell,
Oft shallow is its sluggish flood;
Then, when thy fields thou tendest well,
It o'er them spreads its slime and mud.

The ships descend ere daylight wanes,
The prudent fisher upward goes;
Round reef and rock ice casts its chains,
And boys at will the pathway close.

To this attend, then carefully,
And what thou would, that execute!
Ne'er linger, ne'er o'erhasty be,
For time moves on with measured foot.

◆

Each road to the proper end
Runs straight on, without a bend.

THE FOX AND HUNTSMAN.

Hard 'tis on a fox's traces
To arrive, midst forest-glades;
Hopeless utterly the chase is,
If his flight the huntsman aids.

And so 'tis with many a wonder
(Why A B make *Ab* in fact),
Over which we gape and blunder,
And our head and brains distract.

◆

THE FROGS.

A pool was once congealed with frost;
The frogs in its deep waters lost,
No longer dared to croak or spring;
But promised, being half asleep,
If suffered to the air to creep,
As very nightingales to sing.

A thaw dissolved the ice so strong,—
They proudly steered themselves along,
When landed, squatted on the shore,
And croaked as loudly as before.

◆

THE WEDDING.

A feast was in a village spread,—
It was a wedding-day, they said.
The parlor of the inn I found,
And saw the couples whirling round,
Each lass attended by her lad,
And all seemed loving, blithe and glad;
But on my asking for the bride,
A fellow with a stare replied:
"'Tis not the place that point to raise!
We're only dancing in her honor;
We now have danced three nights and days,
And not bestowed one thought upon her."

. . . .

Whoe'er in life employs his eyes
Such cases oft will recognize.

THE FOX AND CRANE.

Once two persons uninvited
Came to join my dinner table.
For the nonce they lived united,
Fox and crane yclept in fable.

Civil greetings passed between us;
Then I plucked some pigeons tender
For the fox of jackal-genus,
Adding grapes in full-grown splendor.

Long-necked flasks I put as dishes
For the crane without delaying,
Filled with gold and silver fishes,
In the limpid water playing.

Had ye witnessed Reynard planted
At his flat plate all demurely,
Ye with envy must have granted:
"Ne'er was such a gourmand, surely!"

While the bird, with circumspection
On one foot, as usual cradled,
From the flask his fish-refection
With his bill and long neck ladled.

One the pigeons praised, — the other,
As they went, extolled the fishes,
Each one scoffing at his brother
For preferring vulgar dishes.

. . . .

If thou wouldst preserve thy credit,
When thou askest folks to guzzle
At thy board take care to spread it
Suited both for bill and muzzle.

BURIAL.

To the grave one day from a house they bore
A maiden;
To the window the citizens went to explore;
In splendor they lived, and with wealth as of yore
Their banquets were laden.

Then thought they: "The maid to the tomb is now
borne;
We too from our dwellings ere long must be torn,
And he that is left our departure to mourn,
To our riches will be the successor,
For some one must be their possessor."

◆

THE BUYERS.

To an apple-woman's stall
Once some children nimbly ran;
Longing much to purchase all,
They with joyous haste began
Snatching up the piles there raised,
While with eager eyes they gazed
On the rosy fruit so nice;
But when they found out the price,
Down they threw the whole they'd got,
Just as if they were red hot.

. . . . .

The man who gratis will his goods supply
Will never find a lack of folks to buy!

◆

SYMBOLS.

Palm Sunday at the Vatican
They celebrate with palms;
With reverence bows each holy man,
And chants the ancient psalms.
Those very psalms are also sung
With olive boughs in hand,
While holly, mountain wilds among,
In place of palms must stand;
In fine, one seeks some twig that's green,
And takes a willow rod,
So that the pious man may e'en
In small things praise his God.
And if ye have observed it well,
To gain what's fit ye're able,
If ye in faith can but excel;
Such are the myths of fable.

THREATENING SIGNS

If Venus in the evening sky
Is seen in radiant majesty,
If rod-like comets, red as blood,
Are 'mongst the constellations viewed,
Out springs the Ignoramus, yelling:
"The star's exactly o'er my dwelling!
What woeful prospect, ah, for me!"
Then calls his neighbor mournfully:
"Behold that awful sign of evil,
Portending woe to me, poor devil!
My mother's asthma ne'er will leave her,
My child is sick with wind and fever;
I dread the illness of my wife,
A week has passed, devoid of strife, —
And other things have reached my ear;
The Judgment Day has come, I fear!"

His neighbor answers: "Friend, you're right!
Matters look very bad to-night.
Let's go a street or two, though, hence,
And gaze upon the stars from thence."—
No change appears in either case.
Let each remain then in his place,
And wisely do the best he can,
Patient as any other man.

◆

THE MOUNTAIN VILLAGE

"The mountain village was destroyed;
But see how soon is filled the void!
Shingles and boards, as by magic arise,
The babe in his cradle and swaddling-clothes lies;
How blest to trust to God's protection!"
Behold a wooden new erection,
So that, if sparks and wind but choose,
God's self at such a game must lose!

◆

In the world do things go with you ill,
You can't do right, do what you will.

THREE PALINODIAS.

I.

"Incense is but a tribute for the gods,—
To mortals 'tis but poison."

The smoke that from thine altar blows,
Can it the gods offend?
For I observe thou hold'st thy nose—
Pray what does this portend?
Mankind deem incense to excel
Each other earthly thing,
So he that cannot bear its smell,
No incense e'er should bring.

With unmoved face by thee at least
To dolls is homage given;
If not obstructed by the priest,
The scent mounts up to heaven.

II.

CONFLICT OF WIT AND BEAUTY.

Sir Wit, who is so much esteemed,
And who is worthy of all honor,
Saw Beauty his superior deemed
By folks who loved to gaze upon her;
At this he was most sorely vexed.
Then came Sir Breath (long known as fit
To represent the cause of wit),
Beginning, rudely, I admit,
To treat the lady with a text.
To this she hearkened not at all,
But hastened to his principal:
"None are so wise, they say, as you,—
Is not the world enough for two?
If you are obstinate, good-bye!
If wise, to love me you will try,
For be assured the world can ne'er
Give birth to a more handsome pair."

Ἄλλως.

Fair daughters were by beauty reared,
Wit had but dull sons for his lot;
So for a season it appeared
Beauty was constant, Wit was not.

But Wit's a native of the soil,
  So he returned, worked, strove amain,
And found — sweet guerdon for his toil! —
  Beauty to quicken him again.

III.

RAIN AND RAINBOW.

During a heavy storm it chanced
That from his room a cockney glanced
At the fierce tempest as it broke,
While to his neighbor thus he spoke:
"The thunder has our awe inspired,
Our barns by lightning have been fired, —
Our sins to punish, I suppose;
But, in return, to soothe our woes,
See how the rain in torrents fell,
Making the harvest promise well!
But is't a rainbow that I spy
Extending o'er the dark-gray sky?
With it I'm sure we may dispense,
The colored cheat! The vain pretence!"
Dame Iris straightway thus replied:
"Dost dare my beauty to deride?
In realms of space God stationed me
A type of better worlds to be
To eyes that from life's sorrows rove
In cheerful hope to Heaven above,
And, through the mists that hover here
God and His precepts blest revere.
Do thou, then, grovel like the swine,
And to the ground thy snout confine
But suffer the enlightened eye
To feast upon my majesty."

◆

A SYMBOL.

[This fine poem is given by Goethe amongst a small collection of what be calls *Loge* (Lodge) meaning thereby Masonic pieces.]

The mason's trade
  Resembles life,
  With all its strife, —
Is like the stir made
  By man on earth's face.

Though weal and woe
The future may hide,
Unterrified
We onward go
In ne'er-changing race.

A veil of dread
Hangs heavier still.
Deep slumbers fill
The stars overhead,
And the foot-trodden grave.

Observe them well,
And watch them revealing
How solemn feeling
And wonderment swell
The hearts of the brave.

The voice of the blest,
And of spirits on high
Seems loudly to cry:
"To do what is best,
Unceasing endeavor!

"In silence eterne
Here chaplets are twined,
That each noble mind
Its guerdon may earn, —
Then hope ye forever!"

◆

VALEDICTION.

I ONCE was fond of fools,
And bid them come each day;
Then each one brought his tools,
The carpenter to play;
The roof to strip first choosing,
Another to supply,
The wood as trestles using,
To move it by-and-by,
While here and there they ran,
And knocked against each other;
To fret I soon began,
My anger could not smother,

So cried, "Get out, ye fools!"
At this they were offended;
Then each one took his tools,
And so our friendship ended.

Since that I've wiser been,
And sit beside my door;
When one of them is seen,
I cry, "Appear no more!"
"Hence, stupid knave!" I bellow:
At this he's angry, too:
"You impudent old fellow!
And pray, sir, who are you?
Along the streets we riot,
And revel at the fair:
But yet we're pretty quiet,
And folks revile us ne'er.
Don't call us names, then, please!"
At length I meet with ease,
For now they leave my door —
'Tis better than before!

◆

THE COUNTRY SCHOOLMASTER.

I.

A master of a country school
Jumped up one day from off his stool
Inspired with firm resolve to try
To gain the best society;
So to the nearest baths he walked,
And into the saloon he stalked.
He felt quite startled at the door,
Ne'er having seen the like before.
To the first stranger made he now
A very low and graceful bow,
But quite forgot to bear in mind
That people also stood behind;
His left-hand neighbor's paunch he struck
A grievous blow by great ill luck;
Pardon for this he first entreated,
And then in haste his bow repeated.
His right-hand neighbor next he hit,
And begged him, too, to pardon it;

But on his granting his petition,
Another was in like condition;
These compliments he paid to all,
Behind, before, across the hall;
At length one who could stand no more
Showed him impatiently the door.

. . . . .

May many, pondering on their crimes,
A moral draw from this betimes!

II.

As he proceeded on his way
He thought, "I was too weak to-day;
To bow I'll ne'er again be seen;
For goats will swallow what is green."
Across the fields he now must speed,
Not over stumps and stones, indeed,
But over meads and cornfields sweet,
Trampling down all with clumsy feet.
A farmer met him by-and-by,
And didn't ask him: how? or why?
But with his fist saluted him.

"I feel new life in every limb!"
Our traveller cried in ecstasy.
"Who art thou who thus gladden'st me?
May Heaven such blessings ever send!
Ne'er may I want a jovial friend!"

◆

THE LEGEND OF THE HORSESHOE.

When still unknown, and low as well,
Our Lord upon the earth did dwell,
And many disciples with him went
Who seldom knew what his words meant,
He was extremely fond of holding
His court in the market-place, unfolding
The highest precepts to their hearing,
With holy mouth and heart unfolding;
For man, in Heaven's face when preaching,
Adds freedom's strength unto his teaching!

By parables and by example,
He made each market-place a temple.

He thus in peace of mind one day
To some small town with them did stray,
Saw something glitter in the street,
A broken horseshoe lay at his feet,
He then to Peter turned and said:
"Pick up that iron in my stead."
St. Peter out of humor was,
Having in dreams indulged because
All men on thoughts so like to dwell,
How they the world would govern well;
Here fancy revels without bounds;
On this his dearest thoughts he founds.
This treasure-trove he quite despised,
But crowned sceptre he'd have prized;
And why should he now bend his back
To put old iron in his sack?
He turned aside with outward show
As though he heard none speaking so!

The Lord, to his long-suffering true,
Himself picked up the horse's shoe,
And of it made no further mention,
But to the town walked with intention
Of going to a blacksmith's door,
Who gave one farthing for his store,
And now, when through the market strolling,
Cherries some one he heard extolling.
Of these he bought as few or many
As farthing buys, if it buy any,
Which he, in wonted peacefulness,
Gently within his sleeve did press.

Now out at t'other gate they'd gone
Past fields and meadows, houses none;
The road likewise of trees was bare,
The sun shone bright with ardent glare,
So that great price, in plain thus stretched,
A drink of water would have fetched.
The Lord, walking before them all,
Let unawares a cherry fall,
St. Peter ate it, then and there,
As though a golden apple it were.

He relished much the luscious fruit.
The Lord, whenever time would suit,
Another cherry forward sent,
For which St. Peter swiftly bent.
The Lord thus often and again
After the cherries made him strain.
When this had lasted quite a while,
The Lord spoke thus with cheerful smile;
"If thou hadst stirred when first I bade thee,
More comfortable 'twould have made thee;
Whoe'er small things too much disdains,
For smaller ones takes greater pains."

◆

THE WANDERER.

[Published in the Gottingen *Musen Almanach*, having been written "to express his feelings and caprices" after his separation from Frederica.]

WANDERER.

YOUNG woman, may God bless thee,
Thee, and the sucking infant
Upon thy breast!
Let me, against this rocky wall,
Neath the elm-tree's shadow,
Lay aside my burden,
Near thee take my rest.

WOMAN.

What vocation leads thee,
While the day is burning,
Up this dusty path?
Bring'st thou goods from out the town
Round the country?
Smilest thou, stranger,
At my question?

WANDERER.

From the town no goods I bring.
Cool is now the evening;
Show to me the fountain
Whence thou drinkest,
Woman young and kind!

WOMAN.

Up the rocky pathway mount;
Go thou first? Across the thicket
Leads the pathway toward the cottage
That I live in,
To me the fountain
Whence I drink.

WANDERER.

Signs of man's arranging hand
See I 'mid the trees!
Not by thee these stones were joined,
Nature, who so freely scattered!

WOMAN.

Up, still up!

WANDERER.

Lo, a mossy architrave is here!
I discern thee, fashioning spirit?
On the stone thou hast impressed thy seal.

WOMAN.

Onward, stranger!

WANDERER.

Over an inscription am I treading!
'Tis effacéd!
Ye are seen no longer,
Words so deeply graven,
Who your master's true devotion
Should have shown to thousand grandsons.

WOMAN.

At these stones, why
Start'st thou, stranger?
Many stones are lying yonder
Round my cottage.

WANDERER.

Yonder?

WOMAN.

Through the thicket,
Turning to the left,
Here!

WANDERER.

Ye Muses and ye Graces!

WOMAN.

This, then, is my cottage.

WANDERER.

'Tis a ruined temple![*]

WOMAN.

Just below you it, see,
Springs the fountain
Whence I drink.

WANDERER.

Thou dost hover
O'er thy grave, all glowing,
Genius! while upon thee
Hath thy masterpiece
Fallen crumbling,
Thou Immortal One!

WOMAN.

Stay, a cup I'll fetch thee
Whence to drink.

WANDERER.

Ivy circles thy slender
Form so graceful and godlike
How ye rise on high
From the ruins,
Column-pair!
And thou, their lonely sister yonder, —
How thou,
Dusky moss upon thy sacred head, —
Lookest down in mournful majesty
On thy brethren's figures
Lying scattered
At thy feet!

---

[*] Compare with the beautiful description contained in the subsequent lines, an account of a ruined temple of Ceres, given by Chamberlayne in his *Pharonnida* (published in 1659):—

". . . With mournful majesty
A heap of solitary ruins lie,
Half sepulchred in dust, the bankrupt heir
To prodigal antiquity . . ."

In the shadow of the bramble
Earth and rubbish veil them,
Lofty grass is waving o'er them!
Is it thus thou, Nature, prizest
Thy great masterpiece's masterpiece?
Carelessly destroyest thou
Thine own sanctuary,
Sowing thistles there?

WOMAN.

How the infant sleeps!
Wilt thou rest thee in the cottage,
Stranger? Wouldst thou rather,
In the open air still linger?
Now 'tis cool! take thou the child,
While I go and draw some water.
Sleep on, darling! sleep!

WANDERER.

Sweet is thy repose!
How, with heaven-born health imbued,
Peacefully he slumbers!
O thou, born among the ruins
Spread by great antiquity,
On thee rest her spirit!
He whom it encircles
Will, in godlike consciousness,
Every day enjoy.
Full of germ, unfold,
As the smiling spring-time's
Fairest charm,
Outshining all thy fellows!
And when the blossom's husk is faded,
May the full fruit shoot forth
From out thy breast,
And ripen in the sunshine!

WOMAN.

God bless him! — Is he sleeping still?
To the fresh draught I naught can add,
Saving a crust of bread for thee to eat.

WANDERER.

I thank thee well.
How fair the verdure all around
How green!

WOMAN.

My husband soon
Will home return
From labor. Tarry, tarry, man,
And with us eat our evening meal.

WANDERER.

Is it here ye dwell?

WOMAN.

Yonder, within those walls we live.
My father 'twas who built the cottage
Of tiles and stones from out the ruins.
'Tis here we dwell.
He gave me to a husbandman,
And in our arms expired. —
Hast thou been sleeping, dearest heart?
How lively, and how full of play
Sweet rogue!

WANDERER.

Nature, thou ever budding one,
Thou formest each for life's enjoyments,
And, like a mother, all thy children dear,
Blessest with that sweet heritage, — a home
The swallow builds the cornice round,
Unconscious of the beauties
She plasters up.
The caterpillar spins around the bough,
To make her brood a winter house;
And thou dost patch, between antiquity's
Most glorious relics,
For thy mean use,
O man, a humble cot, —
Enjoyest e'en mid tombs!
Farewell, thou happy woman!

WOMAN.

Thou wilt not stay, then?

WANDERER.
May God preserve thee,
And bless thy boy!

WOMAN.
A happy journey!

WANDERER.
Whither conducts the path
Across yon hill?

WOMAN.
To Cuma.

WANDERER.
How far from hence?

WOMAN.
'Tis full three miles.

WANDERER.
Farewell!
O Nature, guide me on my way!
The wandering stranger guide,
Who o'er the tombs
Of holy bygone times
Is passing,
To a kind sheltering place,
From North winds safe,
And where a poplar grove
Shuts out the noontide ray!
And when I come
Home to my cot
At evening,
Illumined by the setting sun,
Let me embrace a wife like this,
Her infant in her arms!

THE DROPS OF NECTAR.

When Minerva, to give pleasure
To Prometheus, her well-loved one,
Brought a brimming bowl of nectar
From the glorious realms of heaven
As a blessing for his creatures,
And to pour into their bosoms
Impulses for arts ennobling,

She with rapid footstep hastened,
Fearing Jupiter might see her,
And the golden goblet trembled,
And there fell a few drops from it
On the verdant plain beneath her.
Then the busy bees flew thither
Straightway, eagerly to drink them,
And the butterfly came quickly
That he, too, might find a drop there;
Even the misshapen spider
Thither crawled and sucked with vigor.

To a happy end they tasted,
They, and other gentle insects!
For with mortals now divide they
Art — that noblest gift of all.

◆

LOVE AS A LANDSCAPE PAINTER.

On a rocky peak once sat I early,
Gazing on the mist with eyes unmoving;
Stretched out like a pall of grayish texture,
All things round, and all above it covered.

Suddenly a boy appeared beside me,
Saying "Friend, what meanest thou by gazing
On the vacant pall with such composure?
Hast thou lost for evermore all pleasure
Both in painting cunningly, and forming?"
On the child I gazed, and thought in secret:
"Would the boy pretend to be a master?"

"Wouldst thou be forever dull and idle,"
Said the boy, "no wisdom thou'lt attain to;
See, I'll straightway paint for thee a figure, —
How to paint a beauteous figure, show thee."

And he then extended his forefinger. —
(Ruddy was it as a youthful rosebud)
Toward the broad and far outstretching carpet,
And began to draw there with his finger.

First on high a radiant sun he painted,
Which upon mine eyes with splendor glistened,
And he made the clouds with golden border,
Through the clouds he let the sunbeams enter;

Painted then the soft and feathery summits
Of the fresh and quickened trees, behind them
One by one with freedom drew the mountains;
Underneath he left no lack of water,
But the river painted so like Nature,
That it seemed to glitter in the sunbeams,
That it seemed against its banks to murmur.

Ah, there blossomed flowers beside the river,
And bright colors gleamed upon the meadow,
Gold, and green, and purple, and enamelled,
All like carbuncles and emeralds seeming;

Bright and clear he added then the heavens,
And the blue-tinged mountains far and farther,
So that I, as though new-born, enraptured
Gazed on, now the painter, now the picture.

Then spake he: "Although I have convinced thee
That this art I understand full surely,
Yet the hardest still is left to show thee."

Thereupon he traced with pointed finger,
And with anxious care, upon the forest,
At the utmost verge, where the strong sunbeams
From the shining ground appeared reflected,
Traced the figure of a lovely maiden,
Fair in form, and clad in graceful fashion,
Fresh the cheeks beneath her brown locks' ambush,
And the cheeks possessed the self-same color
As the finger that had served to paint them.

"O thou boy!" exclaimed I then, "what master
In his school received thee as his pupil,
Teaching thee so truthfully and quickly
Wisely to begin, and well to finish?"

Whilst I still was speaking, lo, a zephyr
Softly rose, and set the tree-tops moving,
Curling all the wavelets on the river,
And the perfect maiden's veil, too, filled it,
And to make my wonderment still greater,
Soon the maiden set her foot in motion,
On she came, approaching toward the station
Where still sat I with my arch instructor.

As now all, yes, all thus moved together,—
Flowers, rivers, trees, the veil,—all moving,—
And the gentle foot of that most fair one,
Can ye think that on my rock I lingered,
Like a rock, as though fast-chained and silent?

◆

GOD, SOUL, AND WORLD.

RHYMED DISTICHS.

[The Distichs, of which these are given as a specimen, are about forty in number.]

How? when? and where?—No answer comes from high;
Thou waitest for the *Because*, and yet thou askest not *Why?*

If the whole is ever to gladden thee,
That whole in the smallest thing thou must see.

Water its living strength first shows,
When obstacles its course oppose.

Transparent appears the radiant air,
Though steel and stone in its breast it may bear;
At length they'll meet with fiery power,
And metal and stones on the earth will shower.

Whate'er a living flame may surround,
No longer is shapeless, or earthly bound.
'Tis now invisible, flies from earth,
And hastens on high to the place of its birth.

This truth may be by all believed:
Whom God deceives, is well deceived.

Who trusts in God,
Fears not His rod.

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF PLANTS.

Thou art confused, my belovèd, at seeing the thousandfold union
Shown in this flowery troop, over the garden dispersed;
Many a name dost thou hear assigned; one after another
Falls on thy listening ear, with a barbarian sound.
None resembleth another, yet all their forms have a likeness;
Therefore a mystical law is by the chorus proclaimed;
Yes, a sacred enigma! Oh, dearest friend, could I only
Happily teach thee the word, which may the mystery solve!
Closely observe how the plant, by little and little progressing,
Step by step guided on, changeth to blossom and fruit!
First from the seed it unravels itself, as soon as the silent
Fruit-bearing womb of the earth kindly allows its escape,
And to the charms of the light, the holy, the ever-in-motion,
Trusteth the delicate leaves, feebly beginning to shoot.
Simply slumbered the force in the seed; a germ of the future,
Peacefully locked in itself, 'neath the integument lay,
Leaf and root, and bud, still void of color, and shapeless;
Thus doth the kernel, while dry, cover that motionless life.
Upward then strives it to swell, in gentle moisture confiding,
And, from the night where it dwelt, straightway ascendeth to light.
Yet still simple remaineth its figure, when first it appeareth;
And 'tis a token like this, points out the child 'mid the plants.

Soon a shoot, succeeding it, rises on high, and reneweth,
Piling up node upon node, ever the primitive form;
Yet not ever alike: for the following leaf, as thou seest,
Ever produceth itself, fashioned in manifold ways.
Longer, more indented, in points and in parts more divided,
Which, all-deformed until now, slept in the organ below.
So at length it attaineth the noble and destined perfection,
Which, in full many a tribe, fills thee with wondering awe.
Many ribbed and toothed, on a surface juicy and swelling,
Free and unending the shoot seemeth in fulness to be;
Yet here Nature restraineth, with powerful hands, the formation,
And to a perfect end, guided with softness its growth,
Less abundantly yielding the sap, contracting the vessels,
So that the figure ere long gentler effects doth disclose.
Soon and in silence is checked the growth of the vigorous branches,
And the rib of the stalk fuller becometh in form.
Leafless, however, and quick the tenderer stem then upspringeth,
And a miraculous sight doth the observer enchant.
Ranged in a circle in numbers that now are small, and now countless,
Gather the small-sized leaves close by the side of their like.
Round the axis compressed the sheltering calyx unfoldeth.
And, as the perfectest type, brilliant-hued coronals forms.
Thus doth Nature bloom, in glory still nobler and fuller,

Showing, in order arranged, member on member upreared.
Wonderment fresh dost thou feel, as soon as the stem rears the flower
Over the scaffolding frail of the alternating leaves.
But this glory is only the new creation's foreteller,
Yes, the leaf with its hues feeleth the hand all divine,
And on a sudden contracteth itself; the tenderest figures
Twofold as yet, hasten on, destined to blend into one.
Lovingly now the beauteous pairs are standing together,
Gathered in countless array, there where the altar is raised.
Hymen hovereth o'er them, and scents delicious and mighty
Stream forth their fragrance so sweet, all things enlivening around.
Presently, parcelled out, unnumbered germs are seen swelling,
Sweetly concealed in the womb, where is made perfect the fruit.
Here doth Nature close the ring of her forces eternal;
Yet doth a new one, at once, cling to the one gone before,
So that the chain be prolonged forever through all generations,
And that the whole may have life, e'en as enjoyed by each part.
Now, my belovèd one, turn thy gaze on the many-hued thousands
Which, confusing no more, gladden the mind as they wave.
Every plant unto thee proclaimeth the laws everlasting,
Every floweret speaks louder and louder to thee;
But if thou here canst decipher the mystic words of the goddess,
Everywhere will they be seen, e'en though the features are changed.
Creeping insects may linger, the eager butterfly hasten, —

Plastic and forming, may man change e'en the figure decreed.
Oh, then, bethink thee, as well, how out of the germ of acquaintance,
Kindly intercourse sprang, slowly unfolding its leaves;
Soon how friendship with might unveiled itself in our bosoms,
And how Amor at length brought forth blossom and fruit!
Think of the manifold ways wherein Nature hath lent to our feelings,
Silently giving them birth, either the first or the last!
Yes, and rejoice in the present day! For love that is holy
Seeketh the noblest of fruits,—that where the thoughts are the same,
Where the opinions agree,—that the pair may, in rapt contemplation,
Lovingly blend into one,—find the more excellent world.

◆

RELIGION AND CHURCH.

THOUGHTS ON JESUS CHRIST'S DESCENT INTO HELL.

[The remarkable Poem, of which this is a literal but faint representation, was written when Goethe was only sixteen years old. It derives additional interest from the fact of its being the very earliest piece of his that is preserved. The few other pieces included by Goethe under the title of *Religion and Church* are polemical, and devoid of interest to the English reader.]

What wondrous noise is heard around!
Through heaven exulting voices sound,
A mighty army marches on.
By thousand millions followed, lo,
To yon dark place makes haste to go,
God's Son, descending from His throne!
He goes—the tempests round Him break,
As Judge and Hero cometh He;
He goes—the constellations quake,
The sun, the world quake fearfully.

I see Him in His victor-car,
On fiery axles borne afar,

Who on the cross for us expired.
The triumph to yon realms He shows, —
Remote from earth, where star ne'er glows, —
The triumph He for us acquired.
He cometh, Hell to extirpate,
Whom He, by dying well nigh killed;
He shall pronounce her fearful fate;
Hark! now the curse is straight fulfilled.

Hell sees the victor come at last,
She feels that now her reign is past,
She quakes and fears to meet His sight;
She knows His thunders' terrors dread,
In vain she seeks to hide her head,
Attempts to fly, but vain is flight;
Vainly she hastes to 'scape pursuit
And to avoid her Judge's eye;
The Lord's fierce wrath restrains her foot
Like brazen chains, — she cannot fly.

Here lies the Dragon, trampled down,
He lies, and feels God's angry frown,
He feels, and grinneth hideously;
He feels Hell's speechless agonies,
A thousand times he howls and sighs:
"Oh, burning flames! quick, swallow me!"
There lies he in the fiery waves,
By torments racked and pangs infernal,
Instant annihilation craves,
And hears, those pangs will be eternal.

Those mighty squadrons, too, are here,
The partners of his cursed career,
Yet far less bad than he were they.
Here lies the countless throng combined,
In black and fearful crowds entwined,
While round him fiery tempests play;
He sees how they the Judge avoid,
He sees the storm upon them feed,
Yet is not at the sight o'erjoyed,
Because his pangs e'en theirs exceed.

The Son of Man in triumph passes
Down to Hell's wild and black morasses,

And there unfolds His majesty.
Hell cannot bear the bright array,
For, since her first created day,
Darkness alone e'er governed she.
She lay remote from ev'ry light,
With torments filled in Chaos here;
God turned forever from her sight
His radiant features glory clear.

Within the realms she calls her own,
She sees the splendor of the Son,
His dreaded glories shining forth;
She sees Him clad in rolling thunder,
She sees the rocks all quake with wonder,
When God before her stands in wrath.
She sees He comes her Judge to be,
She feels the awful pangs inside her,
Herself to slay endeavors she,
But e'en this comfort is denied her.

Now looks she back, with pains untold,
Upon those happy times of old,
When all these glories gave her joy;
When yet her heart revered the truth,
When her glad soul, in endless youth
And rapture dwelt, without alloy.
She calls to mind with maddened thought
How over man her wiles prevailed;
To take revenge on God she sought,
And feels the vengeance it entailed.

God was made man, and came to earth.
Then Satan cried with fearful mirth:
"E'en He my victim now shall be!"
He sought to slay the Lord Most High,
The world's Creator now must die;
But, Satan, endless woe to thee!
Thou thought'st to overcome Him the
Rejoicing in His suffering:
But He in triumph comes again
To bind thee: Death! where is thy sting?

Speak, Hell! where is thy victory?
Thy power destroyed and scattered see!

Know'st thou not now the Highest's might?
See, Satan, see thy rule o'erthrown!
By thousand-varying pangs weighed down,
Thou dwell'st in dark and endless night.
As though by lightning struck thou liest,
No gleam of rapture far or wide;
In vain! no hope thou there descriest, —
For me alone Messiah died!

A howling rises through the air,
A trembling fills each dark vault there,
When Christ to Hell is seen to come.
She snarls with rage, but needs must cower
Before our mighty hero's power;
He signs — and Hell is straightway dumb.
Before His voice the thunders break,
On high His victor-banner blows;
E'en angels at His fury quake,
When Christ to the dread judgment goes.

Now speaks He, and His voice is thunder,
He speaks, the rocks are rent in sunder,
His breath is like devouring flames.
Thus speaks He: "Tremble, ye accursed!
He who from Eden hurled you erst,
Your kingdom's overthrow proclaims.
Look up! My children once were ye,
Your arms against Me then ye turned,
Ye fell, that ye might sinners be,
Ye've now the wages that ye earned.

"My greatest foemen from that day,
Ye led My dearest friends astray, —
As ye had fallen, man must fall.
To kill him evermore ye sought,
'They all shall die the death,' ye thought
But how! for Me I've won them all.
For them alone did I descend,
For them prayed, suffered, perished I.
Ye ne'er shall gain your wicked end;
Who trusts in Me shall never die.

"In endless chains here lie ye now,
Nothing can save you from the slough,

Not boldness, not regret for crime.
Lie, then, and writhe in brimstone fire!
'Twas ye yourselves drew down Mine ire,
Lie and lament throughout all time!
And also ye, whom I selected,
E'en ye forever I disown,
For ye My saving grace rejected:
Ye murmur? blame yourselves alone!

"Ye might have lived with Me in bliss,
For I of yore had promised this;
Ye sinned, and all My prospects slighted;
Wrapped in the sleep of sin ye dwelt,
Now is My fearful judgment felt,
By a just doom your guilt requited.—
Thus spake He, and a fearful storm
From Him proceeds, the lightnings glow,
The thunders seize each wicked form,
And hurl them in the gulf below.

The God-man closeth Hell's sad doors,
In all His majesty He soars
From those dark regions back to light.
He sitteth at the Father's side;
Oh, friends, what joy doth this betide!
For us, for us He still will fight!
The angels' sacred choir around
Rejoice before the mighty Lord,
So that all creatures hear the sound:
"Zebaoth's God be aye adored!"

◆

PROVERBS.

A thousand flies did I at even slay,
Yet did one wake me at the break of day.

Who serves the public is a sorry beast;
He frets himself; no one thanks him the least.

Wouldst thou nothing useless buy,
Be sure the fairs you go not nigh.

I could no greater sorrow own
Than live in Paradise alone.

TAME XENIA.

[The Epigrams bearing the title of *Xenia* were written by Goethe and Schiller together, having been first occasioned by some violent attacks made on them by some insignificant writers. They are extremely numerous, but scarcely any of them could be translated into English. Those here given are merely presented as a specimen.]

God gave to mortals birth,
In his own image, too;
Then came himself to earth,
A mortal kind and true.

Barbarians oft endeavor
Gods for themselves to make;
But they're more hideous ever
Than dragon or than snake.

"What is science, rightly known?"
'Tis the strength of life alone.
Life canst thou engender never,
Life must be life's parent ever.

It matters not, I ween,
Where worms our friends consume,
Beneath the turf so green,
Or 'neath a marble tomb.
Remember, ye who live,
Though frowns the fleeting day,
That to your friends ye give
What never will decay.

What shall I teach thee, the very first thing?—
Fain would I learn o'er my shadow to spring!

◆

EXCULPATION.

Wilt thou dare to blame the woman for her seeming sudden changes,
Swaying east and swaying westward, as the breezes shake the tree?
Fool! thy selfish thought misguides thee—find the *man* that never ranges;
Woman wavers but to seek him—is not then the fault in thee?

PHOŒMION.

In His blest name, who was His own creation,
Who from all time makes *making* his vocation;
The name of Him who makes our faith so bright,
Love, confidence, activity, and might;
In that One's name, who, named though oft he be,
Unknown is ever in Reality:
As far as ear can reach, or eyesight dim,
Thou findest but the known resembling Him;
How high soe'er thy fiery spirit hovers,
Its simile and type it straight discovers;
Onward thou'rt drawn, with feelings light and gay,
Where e'er thou goest, smiling is the way;
No more thou numberest, reckonest no time,
Each step is infinite, each step sublime.

What God would *outwardly* alone control,
And on his finger whirl the mighty Whole?
He loves the *inner* world to move, to view
Nature in Him, Himself in Nature, too,
So that what in Him works, and is, and lives,
The measure of His strength, His spirit gives.

Within us all a universe doth dwell;
And hence each people's usage laudable,
That every one the Best that meets his eyes
As God, yea, e'en *his* God, doth recognize;
To Him both earth and heaven surrenders he,
Fears Him, and loves him, too, if that may be.

◆

THE PARK.

How beautiful! A garden fair is heaven,
Flowers of all hues, and smiling in the sun,
Where all was waste and wilderness before.
Well do ye imitate, ye gods of earth,
The great Creator. Rock, and lake, and glade,
Birds, fishes, and untamed beasts are here.
Your work were all an Eden, but for this —
Here is no man unconscious of a pang,
No perfect Sabbath of unbroken rest.

ANTIQUES.

LEOPOLD, DUKE OF BRUNSWICK.

[Written on the occasion of the death, by drowning, of that Prince.]

Thou wert forcibly seized by the hoary lord of the river, —
Holding thee, ever he shares with thee his streaming domain.
Calmly sleepest thou near his urn as it silently trickles,
Till thou to action art roused, waked by the swift-rolling flood.
Kindly be to the people, as when thou still wert a mortal.
Perfecting that as a god, which thou didst fail in, as man.

◆

ANACREON'S GRAVE.

Where the rose is fresh and blooming — where the vine and myrtle spring —
Where the turtle-dove is cooing — where the gay cicalas sing —
Whose may be the grave surrounded with such store of comely grace,
Like a God-created garden? 'Tis Anacreon's resting-place.
Spring and summer and the autumn poured their gifts around the bard,
And, ere winter came to chill him, sound he slept beneath the sward.

◆

THE HUSBANDMAN.

Lightly doth the furrow fold the golden grain within its breast,
Deeper shroud, old man, shall cover in thy limbs when laid at rest.
Blithely plough, and sow as blithely! Here are springs of mortal cheer,
And when e'en the grave is closing, Hope is ever standing near.

THE BROTHERS.

Slumber, Sleep — they were two brothers, servants to the Gods above:
Kind Prometheus lured them downwards, ever filled with earthly love;
But what Gods could bear so lightly, pressed too hard on men beneath.
Slumber did his brother's duty — Sleep was deepened into Death.

◆

LOVE'S HOUR-GLASS.

Eros! wherefore do I see thee, with the glass in either hand?
Fickle God! with double measure wouldst thou count the shifting sand?
"*This* one flows for parted lovers — slowly drops each tiny bead —
That is for the days of dalliance, and it melts with golden speed."

◆

WARNING.

Do not touch him — do not wake him! Fast asleep is Amor lying;
Go — fulfil thy work appointed — do thy labor of the day.
Thus the wise and careful mother uses every moment flying,
Whilst her child is in the cradle — Slumbers pass too soon away.

◆

PHILOMELA.

Surely, surely, Amor nursed thee, songstress of the plaintive note,
And, in fond and childish fancy, fed thee from his pointed dart.
So, sweet Philomel, the poison sunk into thy guileless throat,
Till, with all love's weight of passion, strike its notes to every heart.

THE CHOSEN ROCK.

Here, in the hush and stillness of mid-noon,
The lover lay, and thought upon his love;
With blithesome voice he spoke to me: "Be thou
My witness, stone! — Yet, therefore, vaunt thee not,
For thou hast many partners of my joy —
To every rock that crowns this grassy dell,
And looks on me and my felicity;
To every forest-stem that I embrace
In my entrancement as I roam along,
Stand thou for a memorial of my bliss!
All mingle with my rapture, and to all
I lift a consecrating cry of joy.
Yet do I lend a voice to thee alone,
As culls the Muse some favorite from the crowd,
And, with a kiss, inspires for evermore."

◆

SOLITUDE.

Oh, ye kindly nymphs, who dwell 'mongst the rocks and the thickets,
Grant unto each whatsoever he may in silence desire!
Comfort impart to the mourner, and to give the doubter instruction,
And let the lover rejoice, finding the bliss that he craves.
For from the gods ye received what they ever denied unto mortals,
Power to comfort and aid all who in you may confide.

◆

HOLY FAMILY.

O child of beauty rare —
O mother chaste and fair —
How happy seemed they both, so far beyond compare!
She, in her infant blest,
And he in conscious rest,
Nestling within the soft warm cradle of her breast!
What joy that sight might bear
To him who sees them there,
If, with a pure and guilt-untroubled eye,
He looked upon the twain, like Joseph standing by.

THE MUSES' MIRROR.

Early one day, the Muse, when eagerly bent on adornment,
Followed a swift-running streamlet, the quietest nook by it seeking.
Quickly and noisily flowing, the changeful surface distorted
Ever her moving form; the goddess departed in anger.
Yet the stream called mockingly after her, saying: "What, truly!
Wilt thou not view, then, the truth, in my mirror so clearly depicted?"
But she already was far away, on the brink of the ocean,
In her figure rejoicing, and duly arranging her garland.

◆

THE TEACHERS.

What time Diogenes, unmoved and still,
Lay in his tub, and basked him in the sun —
What time Calanus clomb, with lightsome step
And smiling cheek up to his fiery tomb —
What rare examples there for Philip's son
To curb his overmastering lust of sway,
But that the Lord of the majestic world
Was all too great for lessons even like these!

◆

MARRIAGE UNEQUAL.

Alas, that even in a heavenly marriage,
The fairest lots should ne'er be reconciled!
Psyche waxed old, and prudent in her carriage,
Whilst Cupid evermore remains the child.

PHŒBUS AND HERMES.

The deep-browed lord of Delos once, and Maia's nimble-witted son,
Contended eagerly by whom the prize of glory should be won;
Hermes longed to grasp the lyre, — the lyre Apollo hoped to gain,
And both their hearts were full of hope, and yet the hopes of both were vain.
For Ares, to decide the strife, between them rudely dashed in ire,
And waving high his falchion keen, he cleft in twain the golden lyre.
Loud Hermes laughed maliciously, but at the direful deed did fall
The deepest grief upon the heart of Phœbus and the Muses all.

THE WREATHS.

Our German Klopstock, if he had his will,
Would bar us from the skirts of Pindus old,
No more the classic laurel should be prized,
But the rough leaflets of our native oak
Alone should glisten in the poet's hair;
Yet did himself, with spirit unreclaimed
From first allegiance to those early gods,
Lead up to Golgotha's most awful height
With more than epic pomp the new Crusade.
But let him range the bright angelic host
On either hill — no matter. By his grave
All gentle hearts should bow them down and weep
For where a hero and a saint have died,
Or where a poet sung prophetical,
Dying as greatly as they greatly lived,
To give memorial to all after-times,
Of lofty worth and courage undismayed;
There, in mute reverence, all devoutly kneel,
In homage of the thorn and laurel wreath,
That were at once their glory and their pang!

THE NEW LOVE.

Love, not the simple youth that whilom wound
Himself about young Psyche's heart, looked round
Olympus with a cold and roving eye,
That had accustomed been to victory.
It rested on a Goddess, noblest far
Of all that noble throng — glorious star —
Venus Urania. And from that hour
He loved her. Ah! to his resistless power
Even she, the holy one, did yield at last,
And in his daring arms he held her fast.
A new and beauteous Love from that embrace
Had birth, which to the mother owed his grace
And purity of soul, whilst from his sire
He borrowed all his passion, all his fire.
Him ever, where the gracious Muses be,
Thou'lt surely find. Such sweet society
Is his delight, and his sharp-pointed dart
Doth rouse within men's breasts the love of Art.

THE CONSECRATED SPOT.

When in the dance of the Nymphs, in the moonlight so holy assembled,
Mingle the Graces, down from Olympus in secret descending,
Here doth the minstrel hide, and list to their numbers enthralling,
Here doth he watch their silent dances' mysterious measure.

SAKONTALA.

Wouldst thou the blossoms of spring, as well as the fruits of the autumn,
Wouldst thou what charms and delights, wouldst thou what plenteously feeds,
Wouldst thou include both Heaven and earth in one designation,
All that is needed is done, when I Sakontala name.

Yesterday thy head was brown, as are the flowing locks of love,
In the bright blue sky I watched thee towering, giant-like above.
Now thy summit, white and hoary, glitters all with silver snow,
Which the stormy night hath shaken from its robes upon thy brow;
And I know that youth and age are bound with such mysterious meaning,
As the days are linked together, one short dream but intervening.

◆

DISTICHS.

Chords are touched by Apollo, — the death-laden bow, too, he bendeth;
  While he the shepherdess charms, Python he lays in the dust.

What is merciful censure? to make thy faults appear smaller?
  May be to veil them? No, no! O'er them to raise thee on high!

Democratic food soon cloys on the multitude's stomach;
  But I'll wager, ere long, other thou'lt give them instead.

What in France has passed by, the Germans continue to practice,
  For the proudest of men flatters the people and fawns.

Who is the happiest of men? He who values the merits of others,
  And in their pleasure takes joy, even as though 'twere his own.

Not in the morning alone, not only at mid-day he charmeth;
  Even at setting, the sun is still the same glorious planet.

THE CHINAMAN IN ROME.

In Rome I saw a stranger from Pekin:
Uncouth and heavy to his eye appeared
The mingled piles of old and modern time.
"Alas!" he said, "what wretched taste is here!
When will they learn to stretch the airy roof
On light pilastered shafts of varnished wood—
Gain the fine sense, and educated eye,
Which only finds in lacquer, carvings quaint,
And variegated tintings, pure delight?"
Hearing these words, unto myself I said,
"Behold the type of many a moon-struck bard,
Who vaunts his tissue, woven of a dream,
'Gainst nature's tapestry, that lasts for aye,
Proclaims as sick the truly sound; and this,
That he, the truly sick, may pass for sound!"

PERFECT BLISS.

All the divine perfections, which whilere
Nature in thrift doled out 'mongst many a fair,
She showered with open hand, thou peerless one, on thee!
And she that was so wondrously endowed,
To whom a throng of noble knees were bowed,
Gave all — Love's perfect gift — her glorious self, to me!

PROVERBS.

A breach is every day,
By many a mortal stormed;
Let them fall in the gaps as they may,
Yet a heap of dead is ne'er formed.

What harm has thy poor mirror done, alas?
Look not so ugly, prythee, in the glass!

One of the mightiest actions is that
When one fries himself in his own fat.

VENETIAN EPIGRAMS.

(Written in 1790.)

Urn and sarcophagus erst were with life adorned by the heathen:
Fauns are dancing around, while with the Bacchanal troop
Checkered circles they trace; and the goat-footed, puffy-cheeked player
Wildly produceth hoarse tones out of the clamorous horn.
Cymbals and drums resound; we see and we hear, too, the marble.
Fluttering bird! oh, how sweet tastes the ripe fruit to thy bill!
Noise there is none to disturb thee, still less to scare away Amor,
Who, in the midst of the throng, learns to delight in his torch.
Thus doth fulness overcome death; and the ashes there covered
Seem, in that silent domain, still to be gladdened with life.
Thus may the minstrel's sarcophagus be hereafter surrounded
With such a scroll, which himself richly with life has adorned.

Clasped in my arms forever eagerly hold I my mistress,
Ever my panting heart throbs wildly against her dear breast,
And on her knees forever is leaning my head, while I'm gazing
Now on her sweet smiling mouth, now on her bright sparkling eyes.
"Oh, thou effeminate!" spake one, "and thus, then, thy days thou art spending?"
Ah, they in sorrow are spent. List while I tell thee my tale:
Yes! I have left my only joy in life far behind me,
Twenty long days hath my car borne me away from her sight.

Vetturini defy me, while crafty chamberlains flatter,
And the sly *valet de place* thinks but of lies and deceit.
If I attempt to escape, the postmaster fastens upon me,
Postboys the upper hand get, custom-house duties enrage.
"Truly, I can't understand thee! thou talkest enigmas! thou seemest
Wrapped in a blissful repose, glad as Rinaldo of yore:" —
Ah, I myself understand full well; 'tis my body that travels,
And 'tis my spirit that rests still in my mistress's arms.

I WOULD liken this gondola unto the soft-rocking cradle,
And the chest on its deck seems a vast coffin to be.
Yes! 'tween the cradle and coffin, we totter and waver forever
On the mighty canal, careless our lifetime is spent.

WHY are the people thus busily moving? For food they are seeking,
Children they fain would beget, feeding them well as they can.
Traveller, mark this well, and when thou art home, do thou likewise!
More can no mortal effect, work with what ardor he will.

I WOULD compare to the land this anvil, its lord to the hammer,
And to the people the plate, which in the middle is bent.
Sad is the poor tin-plate's lot, when the blows are but given at random:
Ne'er will the kettle be made, while they uncertainly fall.

What is the life of a man? Yet thousands are ever accustomed
Freely to talk about man, — what he has done, too, and how.
Even less is a poem; yet thousands read and enjoy it,
Thousands abuse it. — My friend, live and continue to rhyme!

Merry's the trade of a poet; but somewhat a dear one, I fear me;
For, as my book grows apace, all my sequins I lose.

If thou'rt in earnest, no longer delay, but render me happy;
Art thou in jest? Ah, sweet love! time for all jesting is past.

Art thou, then, vexed at my silence? What shall I speak of? Thou markest
Neither my sorrowful sigh, nor my soft eloquent look.
Only one goddess is able the seal of my lips to unloosen, —
When by Aurora I'm found, slumbering calm on thy breast.
Ah, then my hymn in the ears of the earliest gods shall be chanted,
As the Memnonian form breathed forth sweet secrets in song.

In the twilight of morning to climb to the top of the mountain, —
Thee to salute, kindly star, earliest herald of day, —
And to await, with impatience, the gaze of the ruler of heaven, —
Youthful delight, oh, how oft lurest thou me out in the night!
Oh, ye heralds of day, ye heavenly eyes of my mistress,
Now ye appear, and the sun evermore riseth too soon.

Thou art amazed, and dost point to the ocean. It seems to be burning,
Flame-crested billows in play dart round our night-moving bark.
Me it astonisheth not, — of the ocean was born Aphrodite, —
Did not a flame, too, proceed from her for us, in her son?

* * *

Gleaming the ocean appeared, the beauteous billows were smiling,
While a fresh, favoring wind, filling the sails, drove us on.
Free was my bosom from yearning; yet soon my languishing glances
Turned themselves backward in haste, seeking the snow-covered hills.
Treasures unnumbered are southwards lying. Yet one to the northwards
Draws me resistlessly back, like the strong magnet in force.

* * *

Spacious and fair is the world; yet oh! how I thank the kind heavens
That I a garden possess, small though it be, yet mine own.
One which enticeth me homewards; why should a gardener wander?
Honor and pleasure he finds, when to his garden he looks.

* * *

Ah, my maiden is going! she mounts the vessel! My monarch,
Æolus! potentate dread! keep every storm far away!
"Oh, thou fool!" cried the god: "ne'er fear the blustering tempest;
When Love flutters his wings, then mayest thou dread the soft breeze."

ELEGIES.

PART I.

ROMAN ELEGIES.

[The *Roman Elegies* were written in the same year as the *Venetian Epigrams*—viz. 1790.]

Speak, ye stones, I entreat! O speak, ye palaces lofty!
  Utter a word, O ye streets! Wilt thou not, Genius, awake?
All that thy sacred walls, eternal Rome, hold within them
  Teemeth with life; but to *me* all is still silent and dead.
Oh, who will whisper unto me,—when shall I see at the casement
  That one beauteous form, which, while it scorcheth, revives?
Can I as yet not discern the road, on which I forever
  To her and from her shall go, heeding not time as it flies?
Still do I mark the churches, palaces, ruins, and columns,
  As a wise traveller should, would he his journey improve.
Soon all this will be past; and then will there be but *one* temple,
  Amor's temple alone, where the Initiate may go.
Thou art indeed a world, O Rome; and yet were Love absent,
  Then would the world be no world, then would e'en Rome be no Rome.

Do not repent, mine own love, that thou so soon didst surrender!
  Trust me, I deem thee not bold! reverence only I feel.
Manifold workings the darts of Amor possess; some but scratching,

Yet, with insidious effect, poison the bosom for years.
Others mightily feathered, with fresh and newly-born sharpness,
Pierce to the innermost bone, kindle the blood into flame.
In the heroical times, when loved each god and each goddess,
Longing attended on sight; then with fruition was blessed.
Thinkest thou the goddess had long been thinking of love and its pleasures
When she, in Ida's retreats, owned to Anchises her flame?
Had but Luna delayed to kiss the beautiful sleeper,
Oh, by Aurora, ere long, he had in envy been roused!
Hero Leander espied at the noisy feast, and the lover
Hotly and nimbly, ere long, plunged in the night-covered flood.
Rhea Silvia, virgin princess, roamed near the Tiber,
Seeking there water to draw, when by the god she was seized.
Thus were the sons of Mars begotten! The twins did a she-wolf
Suckle and nurture, — and Rome called herself queen of the world.

Alexander, and Cæsar, and Henry, and Frederick, the mighty,
On me would gladly bestow half of the glory they earned,
Could I but grant unto each one night on the couch where I'm lying;
But they, by Orcus' night, sternly, alas! are held down.
Therefore rejoice, O thou living one, blest in thy love-lighted homestead,
Ere the dark Lethe's sad wave wetteth thy fugitive foot.

These few leaves, O ye Graces, a bard presents, in your honor,
On your altar so pure, adding sweet rosebuds as well,
And he does it with hope. The artist is glad in his workshop,
When a Pantheon it seems round him forever to bring.
Jupiter knits his godlike brow, — hers, Juno uplifteth ;
Phœbus strides on before, shaking his curly-locked head ;
Calmly and dryly Minerva looks down, and Hermes, the light one,
Turneth his glances aside, roguish and tender at once.
But towards Bacchus, the yielding, the dreaming, raiseth Cythere
Looks both longing and sweet, e'en in the marble yet moist.
Of his embraces she thinks with delight, and seems to be asking : —
"Should not our glorious son take up his place by our side ?"

Amor is ever a rogue, and all who believe him are cheated !
To me the hypocrite came : "Trust me, I pray thee, this once.
Honest is now my intent, — with grateful thanks I acknowledge
That thou thy life and thy works hast to my worship ordained.
See, I have followed thee hither, to Rome, with kindly intention,
Hoping to give thee mine aid, e'en in the foreigner's land.
Every traveller complains that the quarters he meets with are wretched ;
Happily lodged, though, is he, who is by Amor received.
Thou dost observe the ruins of ancient buildings with wonder,

Thoughtfully wandering on, over each time-hallowed spot.
Thou dost honor still more the worthy relics created
By the few artists whom *I* loved in their studios to seek.
I 'twas fashioned those forms! thy pardon, — I boast not at present;
Presently thou shalt confess, that what I tell thee is true
Now that thou servest me more idly, where are the beauteous figures,
Where are the colors, the light, which thy creations once filled?
Hast thou a mind again to form? The school of the Grecians
Still remains open, my friend; years have not barred up its doors.
I, the teacher, am ever young, and love all the youthful,
Love not the subtle and old; Mother, observe what I say!
Still was new the Antique, when yonder blest ones were living;
Happily live, and in thee, ages long vanished will live!
Food for song, where hopest thou to find it? I only can give it,
And a more excellent style, love, and love only can teach."
Thus did the Sophist discourse. What mortal, alas! could resist him?
And when a master commands, I have been trained to obey.
Now he deceitfully keeps his word, gives food for my numbers,
But, while he does so, alas! robs me of time, strength, and mind.
Looks, and pressure of hands, and words of kindness, and kisses,
Syllables teeming with thought, by a fond pair are exchanged.

Then becomes whispering talk,—and stammering, a language enchanting.
  Free from all prosody's rules, dies such a hymn on the ear.
Thee, Aurora, I used to own as the friend of the Muses;
  Hath, then, Amor the rogue cheated, Aurora, e'en thee?
Thou dost appear to me now as his friend, and again dost awake me
  Unto a day of delight, while at his altar I kneel.
All her locks I find on my bosom, her head is reposing,
  Pressing with softness the arm, which round her neck is entwined;
Oh! what a joyous awakening, ye hours so peaceful, succeeded,
  Monument sweet of the bliss which had first rocked us to sleep!
In her slumber she moves, and sinks, while her face is averted.
  Far on the breadth of the couch, leaving her hand still in mine.
Heartfelt love unites us forever, and yearnings unsullied,
  And our cravings alone claim for themselves the exchange.
One faint touch of the hand, and her eyes so heavenly see I
  Once more open. Ah, no! let me still look on that form!
Closed still remain! Ye make me confused and drunken, ye rob me
  Far too soon of the bliss pure contemplation affords.
Mighty, indeed, are these figures! these limbs, how gracefully rounded!
  Theseus, could'st thou e'er fly, whilst Ariadne thus slept?
Only one single kiss on these lips! O Theseus, now leave us!
  Gaze on her eyes! she awakes! — Firmly she holds thee embraced!

PART II.

ALEXIS AND DORA.

[This beautiful poem was first published in Schiller's *Horen.*]

FARTHER and farther away, alas! at each moment the vessel
Hastens, as onward it glides, cleaving the foam-covered flood!
Long is the track ploughed up by the keel where dolphins are sporting,
Following fast in its rear, while it seems flying pursuit.
All forebodes a prosperous voyage; the sailor with calmness
Leans 'gainst the sail, which alone all that is needed performs.
Forward presses the heart of each seaman, like colors and streamers;
Backward one only is seen, mournfully fixed near the mast,
While on the blue-tinged mountains, which fast are receding, he gazeth,
And as they sink in the sea, joy from his bosom departs,
Vanished from thee, too, O Dora, is now the vessel that robs thee
Of thine Alexis, thy friend, — ah, thy betrothèd as well!
Thou, too, art after me gazing in vain. Our hearts are still throbbing,
Though, for each other, yet, ah! 'gainst one another no more.
Oh, thou single moment, wherein I found life! thou outweighest
Every day which had else coldly from memory fled.
'Twas in that moment alone, the last, that upon me descended
Life, such as deities grant, though thou perceived'st it not.
Phœbus, in vain with thy rays dost thou clothe the ether in glory:
Thine all-brightening day hateful alone is to me

Into myself I retreat for shelter, and there, in the silence,
 Strive to recover the time when she appeared with each day.
Was it possible beauty like this to see, and not feel it?
 Worked not those heavenly charms e'en on a mind dull as thine?
Blame not thyself, unhappy one! Oft doth the bard an enigma
 Thus propose to the throng, skilfully hidden in words.
Each one enjoys the strange commingling of images graceful.
 Yet still is wanting the word which will discover the sense.
When at length it is found, the heart of each hearer is gladdened,
 And in the poem he sees meaning of twofold delight.
Wherefore so late didst thou remove the bandage, O Amor,
 Which thou hadst placed o'er mine eyes, — wherefore remove it so late?
Long did the vessel, when laden, lie waiting for favoring breezes,
 'Till in kindness the wind blew from the land o'er the sea.
Vacant times of youth! and vacant dreams of the future!
 Ye all vanish, and naught, saving the moment, remains.
Yes! it remains,—my joy still remains! I hold thee, my Dora,
 And thine image alone, Dora, by hope is disclosed.
Oft have I seen thee go, with modesty clad, to the temple,
 While thy mother so dear solemnly went by thy side.
Eager and nimble thou wert, in bearing thy fruit to the market,

Boldly the pail from the well didst thou sustain on thy head.
Then was revealed thy neck, then seen thy shoulders so beauteous,
Then, before all things, the grace filling thy motions was seen.
Oft have I feared that the pitcher perchance was in danger of falling,
Yet it ever remained firm on the circular cloth.
Thus, fair neighbor, yes, thus I oft was wont to observe thee,
As on the stars I might gaze, as I might gaze on the moon,
Glad indeed at the sight, yet feeling within my calm bosom
Not the remotest desire ever to call them mine own.
Years thus fleeted away! Although our houses were only
Twenty paces apart, yet I thy threshold ne'er crossed.
Now by the fearful flood are we parted! Thou liest to Heaven,
Billow! thy beautiful blue seems to me dark as the night.
All were now in movement: a boy to the house of my father
Ran at full speed and exclaimed: "Hasten thee quick to the strand!
Hoisted the sail is already, e'en now in the wind it is fluttering,
While the anchor they weigh, heaving it up from the sand;
Come, Alexis, oh, come!" — My worthy stout-hearted father
Pressed, with a blessing, his hand down on my curly-locked head,
While my mother carefully reached me a newly-made bundle;
"Happy may'st thou return!" cried they— "both happy and rich!"

Then I sprang away, and under my arm held the bundle,
Running along by the wall. Standing I found thee hard by,
At the door of thy garden. Thou smilingly saidst then: — "Alexis!
Say, are yon boisterous crew going thy comrades to be?
Foreign coasts wilt thou visit, and precious merchandise purchase,
Ornaments meet for the rich matrons who dwell in the town,
Bring me, also, I pray thee, a light chain; gladly I'll pay thee,
Oft have I wished to possess some such a trinket as that."
There I remained, and asked, as merchants are wont, with precision
After the form and the weight which thy commission should have.
Modest, indeed, was the price thou didst name! I meanwhile was gazing
On thy neck which deserved ornaments worn but by queens.
Loudly now rose the cry from the ship; then kindly thou spakest: —
"Take, I entreat thee, some fruit out of the garden, my friend!
Take the ripest oranges, figs of the whitest; the ocean
Beareth no fruit, and, in truth, 'tis not produced by each land."
So I entered in. Thou pluckedst the fruit from the branches,
And the burden of gold was in thine apron upheld.
Oft did I cry, enough! But fairer fruits were still falling
Into thy hand as I spake, ever obeying thy touch.
Presently didst thou reach the arbor; there lay there a basket,
Sweet blooming myrtle trees waved, as we drew nigh, o'er our heads.

Then thou began'st to arrange the fruit with skill and in silence:
First the orange, which lay heavy as though 'twere of gold,
Then the yielding fig, by the slightest pressure disfigured,
And with myrtle the gift soon was both covered and graced.
But I raised it not up. I stood. Our eyes met together,
And my eyesight grew dim, seeming obscured by a film.
Soon I felt thy bosom on mine! Mine arm was soon twining
Round thy beautiful form; thousand times kissed I thy neck.
On my shoulder sank thy head; thy fair arms, encircling,
Soon rendered perfect the ring knitting the rapturous pair.
Amor's hands I felt: he pressed us together with ardor,
And, from the firmament clear, thrice did it thunder; then tears
Streamed from mine eyes in torrents, thou weptest, I wept, both were weeping,
And, 'mid our sorrow and bliss, even the world seemed to die.
Louder and louder they called from the strand; my feet would no longer
Bear my weight, and I cried: — "Dora! and art thou not mine?"
"Thine forever!" thou gently didst say. Then the tears we were shedding
Seemed to be wiped from our eyes, as by the breath of a god.
Nearer was heard the cry "Alexis!" The stripling who sought me
Suddenly peeped through the door. How he the basket snatched up!
How he urged me away! how pressed I thy hand! Dost thou ask me

How the vessel I reached? Drunken I seemed, well I know.
Drunken my shipmates believed me, and so had pity upon me;
And as the breeze drove us on, distance the town soon obscured.
"Thine forever!" thou, Dora, didst murmur; it fell on my senses
With the thunder of Zeus! while by the thunderer's throne
Stood his daughter, the Goddess of Love; the Graces were standing
Close by her side! so the bond beareth an impress divine!
Oh, then hasten, thou ship, with every favoring zephyr!
Onward, thou powerful keel, cleaving the waves as they foam!
Bring me unto the foreign harbor, so that the goldsmith
May in his workshop prepare straightway the heavenly pledge!
Ay, of a truth, the chain shall indeed be a chain, O my Dora!
Nine times encircling thy neck, loosely around it entwined.
Other and manifold trinkets I'll buy thee; gold-mounted bracelets,
Richly and skilfully wrought, also shall grace thy fair hand.
There shall the ruby and emerald vie, the sapphire so lovely
Be to the jacinth opposed, seeming its foil; while the gold
Holds all the jewels together, in beauteous union commingled
Oh, how the bridegroom exults, when he adorns his betrothed!
Pearls if I see, of thee they remind me; each ring that is shown me
Brings to my mind thy fair hand's graceful and tapering form.

I will barter and buy; the fairest of all shalt thou choose thee,
  Joyously would I devote all of the cargo to thee.
Yet not trinkets and jewels alone is thy loved one procuring;
  With them he brings thee whate'er gives to a housewife delight.
Fine and woollen coverlets, wrought with an edging of purple,
  Fit for a couch where we both, lovingly, gently may rest;
Costly pieces of linen. Thou sittest and sewest, and clothest
  Me, and thyself, and, perchance, even a third with it too.
Visions of hope, deceive ye my heart! Ye kindly Immortals,
  Soften this fierce-raging flame, wildly pervading my breast!
Yet how I long to feel them again, those rapturous torments,
  When, in their stead, care draws nigh, coldly and fearfully calm.
Neither the Furies' torch, nor the hounds of hell with their barking
  Awe the delinquent so much, down in the plains of despair,
As by the motionless spectre I'm awed, that shows me the fair one
  Far away: of a truth, open the garden-door stands!
And another one cometh! For him the fruit, too, is falling,
  And for him, also, the fig strengthening honey doth yield!
Doth she entice him as well to the arbor? He follows? Oh, make me
  Blind, ye Immortals! efface visions like this from my mind!
Yes, she is but a maiden! And she who to one doth so quickly
  Yield, to another ere long, doubtless, will turn herself round.

Smile not, Zeus, for this once, at an oath so cruelly broken!
Thunder more fearfully! Strike! — Stay — thy fierce lightnings withhold!
Hurl at me thy quivering bolt! In the darkness of midnight
Strike with thy lightning this mast, make it a pitiful wreck!
Scatter the planks all around, and give to the boisterous billows
All these wares, and let *me* be to the dolphins a prey! —
Now, ye Muses, enough! In vain would ye strive to depicture
How, in a love-laden breast, anguish alternates with bliss.
Ye cannot heal the wounds, it is true, that love hath inflicted;
Yet from you only proceeds, kindly ones, comfort and balm.

SONG OF THE FATES.

FROM IPHIGENIA IN TAURIS.

ACT IV. SCENE 5.

YE children of mortals
The deities dread!
The mastery hold they
In hands all eternal,
And use them, unquestioned,
What manner they like.

Let *him* fear them doubly,
Whom they have uplifted!
On cliffs and on clouds, lo,
Round tables all-golden,
The seats are made ready.

When rises contention,
The guests are hurled downwards
With shame and dishonor
To deep depths of midnight,
And vainly await they,
Bound fast in the darkness,
A just condemnation.

But *they* remain ever
In firmness unshaken
Round tables all-golden.
On stride they from mountain
To mountain far distant:
From out the abysses'
Dark jaws, the breath rises
Of torment-choked Titans
Up tow'rds them, like incense
In light clouds ascending.

The rulers immortal
Avert from whole peoples
Their blessing-fraught glances,
And shun, in the children,
To trace the once cherished,
Still eloquent features
Their ancestors wore.

Thus chanted the Parcae;
The old man, the banished,
In gloomy vault lying,
Their song overheareth,
Sons, grandsons rememb'reth
And shaketh his head.

HERMANN AND DOROTHEA.

FORTUNE AND LOT.

Never before have I seen our market and streets so deserted;
Truly the town is as though 'twere swept out, or dead: for not fifty
Still are remaining behind, methinks, of our whole population.
What will not curiosity do? Thus runneth and rusheth,
Each one now to see the train of the poor wretched exiles,
Up to the causeway on which they travel, is nigh an hour's journey.
Still runs thither the crowd, in the dust and heat of the mid-day;
Yet, should not I like to stir from my place to see what affliction
Good men suffer in flight, who now, with the rescued possessions,
Leaving, alas! the Rhine's charming bank, that country of beauty,
Come over here to us, and wander along through the windings
Of this fruitful vale, a nook by fortune most favored.
Nobly, wife, hast thou done, in sending our son on kind errand,
Bearing with him old linen, and something for eating and drinking.

All to dispense to the poor; for to give is the rich man's first duty;
Oh, what a pace the boy drove! and how he managed the horses!
Ay, and took for himself our carriage, — the new one; four persons
Sit with comfort inside, and out on the dickey the driver;
But all alone went he now, and how lightly it rolled round the corner;

Sitting at ease beneath the gate of his house in the market.
Thus, addressed his wife, the host of the Golden Lion.

Then made answer to him, the prudent and sensible housewife:
"Father, not willing am I to part with my linen, though worn out,
For it is useful for much, and not to be purchased with money,
If one should need its use. Yet to-day I gave, ay, and gladly,
Many a better piece, made up for chemises and covers,
Since I heard of old people and children going there naked.
But wilt thou pardon me now? for thy chest, too, has been rifled,
And, above all, I gave the dressing-gown — finest of cotton,
Bright with Indian flowers, and lined with the finest of flannel;
But it was thin, you know, and old, and quite out of fashion."

But upon that, with a smile, out spake the excellent landlord:
"Still, am I sorry to lose it, — the old gown made of good cotton, —
Real East Indian stuff — one will not get such another.
Well! I wore it no more; for a man (so the world will now have it),
Must at all hours of the day, in frock or dress-coat exhibit,
And ever booted be; both slippers and caps are forbidden."

"Look!" replied the good wife, "there are some already returning,
Who, with the rest, saw the train; yet surely it now must have passed by.
See how dusty are all their shoes, how glowing their faces!

And with his handkerchief each wipes off the sweat from his forehead.
Never may I in the heat, for such a spectacle, so far
Run and suffer! In truth the *recital* I find quite sufficient."

Then, observed the good father, in tones of great animation:
"Seldom hath such weather for such a harvest been granted;
And we are getting in the fruit, as the hay is in already,
Dry: — the sky is clear, no cloud can be seen in the heavens,
And from the East the wind is blowing with loveliest coolness;
This is indeed settled weather! the corn over-ripe is already,
And we begin to-morrow to cut down the glorious harvest."

Whilst he thus spake, still swelled the troops of men and of women
Who, through the market square, to their homes were now seen returning;
And thus, too, at full speed returning along with his daughters,
Came to the other side of the square, where his new house was standing,
Riding in open carriage of handsome landau pattern,
Richest amongst his neighbors, the foremost of all the town's merchants.
Lively grew the streets; for the place was well peopled, and in it
Many a factory worked, and many a business was thriving.

Thus, then, under the gateway still sat the couple familiar,
And in many remarks on the passing crowd found amusement.
But the worthy housewife at length spoke out, thus commencing:

"See! there comes the vicar, and there, too, our neighbor, the druggist,
Coming along with him; a full account they shall give us,
What they have seen out yonder, and what gives no pleasure to look on."

Friendly they both came on, and greeted the good married couple;
Seated themselves on the benches, — the wooden ones under the gateway, —
Shook off the dust from their feet, and fanned for a breeze with their 'kerchiefs.

Then the druggist first, after many mutual greetings,
Thus began to speak, and said, in a tone almost fretful!
"So is it ever with men! and one is still just like the other,
In that he loves to stare, when misfortune befalleth his neighbor;
Each one runs to behold the flames breaking out with destruction,
Each the poor criminal marks who is dragged to a death of keen torture;
Each one is walking out now to gaze on the woes of the exiles.
No one thinking, meanwhile, that himself by a similar fortune,
If not next, yet at least, in the course of time may be stricken.
Levity such as this I pardon not: yet man displays it!"

Then observed in reply the honored, intelligent vicar, —
He, the pride of the town, still young in his earliest manhood.
He was acquainted with life, and knew the wants of his hearers.
Thoroughly was he impressed with the value supreme of the Scriptures,
Which man's destiny to him reveal, and what feelings best suit it;

While he was also well versed in the best of secular writings.
He then said: "I am loath to find fault with an innocent instinct,
Which hath at all times been given to man by good Mother Nature;
For what prudence and sense cannot always do, may be often
Done by such fortunate impulse as irresistibly guides us,
Were not man strongly induced by curiosity's ardor,
Say, would he ever have learnt how natural things hold together
In such lovely connection? For, first, he craved what was novel,
Then with unwearied pains continued his search for the useful,
Longing at last for the good, which exalts him, and gives him new value.
Levity in his youth is his gladsome companion, to danger
Ever shutting his eyes, and the traces of pain and of evil
Blotting with wholesome speed, so soon as their forms have past by him.
Truly may that man be praised, in whose riper years is developed
Out of such jovial temper the steady and strong understanding,
Which in joy or in sorrow exerts itself, zealous and active;
For he will bring forth good, and atone for each hour he has wasted."

Suddenly then began the hostess, with friendly impatience,
"Tell us what you have seen; for that's what I wish to be hearing."

"Hardly," replied thereupon the druggist, with emphasis speaking,
"Shall I in short space again feel happy since all I have witnessed.

Who could describe it aright,—that manifold scene of disaster?
Clouds of dust from afar, ere yet we came down to the meadows,
Saw we at once; though the train, from hill to hill as it progressed,
Still was hid from our sight, and we could but little distinguish.
But when we reached the road which goes across through the valley,
Truly great was the crowding and din of the travellers' wagons.
Ah! we saw then enough of the poor men, while they passed by us,
And could but learn, how bitter is flight, with such sorrows attended,
And yet how joyous the sense of life, when hastily rescued.
Piteous was it to see the goods of every description,
Which the well-furnished house contains, and which a good landlord
In it has placed about, each thing in its proper position,
Always ready for use (for all things are needed and useful),
Now to see all these loaded on wagons and carts of all fashions,
One thing thrust through another, in over-haste of removal.
Over the chest there lay the sieve, and the good woollen blankets
In the kneading trough, the bed and the sheets o'er the mirror.
Ah! and, as at the fire twenty years ago we all noticed,
Danger took from man altogether his powers of reflection,
So that he seized what was paltry, and left what was precious behind him.
Just so in this case, too, with a carefulness lacking discretion,
Worthless things took they on, to burden their oxen and horses,

Such as old boards and casks, the goose-coop and with it the bird-cage.
Women and children, too, gasped as they dragged along with their bundles,
Under baskets and tubs filled with things of no use to their owners;
Since man is still unwilling the last of his goods to abandon.
Thus on the dusty road the crowding train travelled onward,
Orderless and confused with ill-matched pairs of faint horses,
One of which wished to go slow, while the other was eager to hasten,
Then there arose the cry of the squeezed-up women and children,
Mixed with the lowing of cattle, and dogs all barking in chorus,
And with the wail of the aged and sick, all seated and swaying
High aloft upon beds, on the hard and overpacked wagons.
But, driven out of the rut, to the very edge of the highway,
Wandered a creaking wheel; — upsetting, the vehicle rolled down
Into the ditch, with the swing its human freight quick discharging
Far in the field, — with dire screams, yet with fortunate issue.
After them tumbled the chests, and fell by the side of the wagon.
Truly, he who saw them in falling, expected to find them
Crushed and shattered beneath the load of the boxes and cupboards.
Thus, then, they lay, — the wagon all broken, the people all helpless —
For the others went on, and with speed drew past, each one thinking
Only about himself, while the stream still hurried him forward.

Then did we hasten to them, and found the sick and the aged,
Who, when at home and in bed, scarce bore their continual sufferings,
And now injured here on the ground lay moaning and groaning,
Scorched at once by the sun, and choked by the dust thickly waving."

Moved by the tale, thereupon replied the humane-hearted landlord:
"O that Hermann may find them, to give both comfort and clothing!
Loth should I be to see them; the sight of misery pains me.
Though deeply moved by the first report of such a disaster,
Sent we in haste a mite from our superfluity, so that
Some might be strengthened therewith, and we feel our hearts the more tranquil.
But let us now no more renew these pictures of sorrow.
Quickly into the hearts of men steals fear of the future,
And dull care, which by me than evil itself is more hated,
Step now into our room at the back — our cool little parlor.
Ne'er shines the sun therein; ne'er forces the warm air a passage
Through the thickly built walls. And, mother dear, bring us a wee glass
Of the good Eighty-three, to drive far away all bad fancies.
Here there is no pleasure in drinking; the flies so buzz round the glasses."
Thus they all went in, and enjoyment found in the coolness.

Carefully brought the good mother some wine of glorious brightness,
In well-cut decanters, on tray of tin brightly varnished,

With the light-green rummers, the genuine goblets for Rhine wine.
And, thus sitting, the three surrounded the high polished table,
Round and brown, which stood upon feet so strong and so steady.
Merrily soon rang the glass of the host on that of the vicar;
But the druggist held *his* unmoved, in deep meditation;
Whom with friendly words the host thus challenged to join them:
"Drink and be merry, good neighbor; for God from misfortune hath saved us,
And, of his goodness, will still continue to save us in future.
Who can fail to acknowledge that since the dread conflagration,
When he chastened us sore, He hath ever constantly blessed us;
Ay, and constantly guarded, as man doth guard his eye's apple,
Keeping with greatest care what of all his members is dearest?
Should He not, then, continue to guard and help us still further?
Truly, how great is His power, then only man sees, when in danger.
Should, then, this flourishing town, which He, through its diligent burghers,
First from its ashes anew built up, and then loaded with blessings,
Now again be destroyed by Him, and our pains brought to nothing?"

Cheerfully, then, and gently, replied the excellent vicar:
"Hold ye fast this faith, and hold ye fast this conviction!
For it will make you in joy both steadfast and sure, and in sorrow
Sweet is the comfort it yields, and glorious the hope it enlivens."

Then, replied the host, with thoughts judicious and manly:
"How have I greeted full oft with wonder the swell of the Rhine flood,
When in my business journeys engaged once more I approached it!
Grander it always seemed, and exalted my thoughts and my spirits!
But I could never think that his bank, in loveliness smiling,
Soon should prove a rampart to guard off Frankish invasion.
Thus doth Nature guard us, thus guard us our brave-hearted Germans,
Thus the Lord himself; who, then, would lose heart, like a dotard?
Tired are the combatants now, and to peace is everything pointing.
And when the feast long wished for within our church shall be holden,
And the bells' solemn peal shall reply to the swell of the organ,
Mixed with the trumpet's sound, keeping time with the soaring Te Deum,
Then may our Hermann, too, on that day of rejoicing, Sir Vicar,
Stand resolved with his bride before you in front of the altar,
And so the happy feast-day, observed alike in all countries,
Seem in future to me a glad home-anniversary likewise!
But I am sorry to see the lad, who always so active
Shows himself for me at home, out of doors so slow and so bashful.
Little desire hath he amongst people to make his appearance;
Nay, he avoids altogether the company of our young maidens,
And the frolicsome dance, in which youth ever rejoiceth."

Thus he spake and then listened. The noise of clattering horses,
Distant at first, was heard to draw near, and the roll of the carriage,
Which with impetuous speed now came thundering under the gateway.

HERMANN.

When now the well-formed son came into the parlor and joined them,
Keen and direct were the glances with which the vicar surveyed him,
And remarked his manner, and scanned the whole of his bearing
With the observant eye which easily reads through each feature:
Then he smiled, and with words of cordial purport addressed him:
"Surely, an altered man you come in! I never have seen you
Look so sprightly before, with a gleam of such animation.
Joyous you come and gay; 'tis clear you divided your presents
Ably amongst the poor, and received in return their rich blessing."

Quickly then the son with words of earnestness answered;
"Whether I merited praise, I know not; but my own feelings
Bade me to do what now I wish to relate to you fully,
Mother, you rummaged so long your old stores in searching and choosing,
That it was not till late that the bundle was all got together,
And the wine and the beer were slowly and carefully packed up.
When to the gate at length, and along the street I proceeded,
Streaming back came the mass of the townsmen, with women and children,

Right in my way; and now far off was the train of the exiles.
Therefore I held on faster, and quickly drove to the village,
Where they would halt, as I heard, for the night, and rest their poor bodies.

When now, as I went on, I reached the new road through the valley,
There was a wagon in sight, constructed with suitable timbers,
Drawn by two oxen, the largest and strongest that foreigners boast of,
Close by its side with steps full of strength was walking a maiden,
Guiding with a long rod the pair of powerful cattle,
Urging on now, and again holding back, as she skilfully led them.
Soon as the maiden saw me, she calmly came near to my horses,
Saying: "It is not always we've been in such doleful condition
As you behold us to-day along these roads of your country,
Truly I am not accustomed to ask the donations of strangers,
Which they oft grudgingly give, to be rid of the poor man's petitions:
But I am urged to speak by necessity. Stretched on the straw here,
Newly delivered, the wife of a once rich proprietor lieth,
Whom, with child as she was, I scarce saved with the steers and the wagon.
Slowly we follow the rest, while in life she hath hardly continued.
Naked now on her arm the new-born infant is lying,
And with but scanty means our people are able to help us,
If in the village hard by, where we think of resting, we find them;

Though I am greatly in fear they already are gone along past it.
If from these parts you come, and a store of superfluous linen
Anywhere have at command, on the poor it were kind to bestow it."

Thus she spake; and, faint and pale, from the straw the poor woman
Rising showed herself to me; when thus in return I addressed them:
"Good men, surely, oft are warned by a spirit from heaven,
So that they feel the need which o'er their poor brother is hanging:
For my mother, your trouble thus feeling beforehand, a bundle
Gave me, wherewith at once to supply the wants of the naked."
Then I untied the knots of the cord, and the dressing-gown gave her,
Once our father's, and with it I gave the chemises and flannel,
And she thanked me with joy, and exclaimed: "The prosperous think not
Miracles still are wrought; for man in misery only
Sees God's hand and finger, which good men guideth to good men,
What through you He is doing to us, may He do to you likewise!"
And I saw the glad mother the different pieces of linen
Handling, but most of all, the gown's soft lining of flannel.
Then said the maiden to her: "Now speed we on to the village,
Where for the night our people already are halting and resting.
There the baby-clothes, one and all, I'll quickly attend to."
Then she greeted me, and thanks the most cordial expressing,

Drove on the oxen, and so the wagon went forward. I waited,
Still holding back my horses; for doubt arose in my bosom,
Whether with hurrying steeds I should go to the village, the viands
'Mongst the rest of the crowd to dispense, or here to the maiden
All deliver at once, that she with discretion might share it,
But within my heart I quickly decided, and gently
After her went, and o'ertook her soon, and quickly said to her,
" 'Tis not linen alone, good maiden, to bring in the carriage,
That my mother gave me, wherewith to cover the naked;
But she added thereto both meat and drink in abundance,
And I have plenty thereof packed up in the box of the carriage,
But now I feel inclined these presents, as well as the others,
Into thy hand to give, thus best fulfilling my mission:
Thou wilt dispense them with judgment, while I by chance must be guided.'
Then replied the maiden: " With all fidelity will I
There dispose of your gifts, and the poor shall richly enjoy them.
Thus she spake, and quickly I opened the box of the carriage,
Bringing out therefrom the loaves, and the hams weighing heavy,
Bottles of wine and beer, and all the rest, to give to her.
More would I fain have given her still, but the box was now empty.
Then she packed them all by the feet of the mother, and so went
Onward, while with all speed to the town I came back with my horses."

When now Hermann had ended, at once the talkative neighbor,
Taking up the discourse, exclaimed: "Oh, that man is happy,
Who in these days of flight and confusion alone in his his house lives,
Having nor wife nor children to cringe before him in terror.
Happy I feel myself now; nor would I to-day for much money
Bear the title of father, and have wife and children to care for.
Often ere now about flight have I thought with myself, and have packed up
All the best of my goods together, — the chains and the old coins
Of my late mother, whereof not a thing has been sold to this moment.
Much, to be sure, would be left behind not easy to furnish;
Even my simples and roots, collected there with much trouble,
I should be sorry to lose, though things of no very great value.
Still, only let the dispenser remain, and I go with some comfort.
Let me but rescue my cash and my body, and all is then rescued.
Easiest from such troubles escapes the man that is single."

"Neighbor," replied thereupon young Hermann, with emphasis speaking,
"Not at all do I think as thou, and thy speech I must censure.
Is, then, he the best man, who in prosperous days and in adverse
Thinks of himself alone, and to share his joys and his sorrows
Knows not, nor feels thereto in his heart the least inclination?
Sooner now than ever could I determine to marry.

Many a good maid now stands in need of a man to protect her:
Many a man needs a wife to cheer him when troubles are threatening."

Smiling, said thereupon the father: "I hear thee with gladness;
Such a sensible word in my presence thou seldom hast spoken."

But the mother at once chimed in, her part quickly taking;
"Son, in good truth thou art right; and thy parents set the example.
For they were no days of joy in which we chose one another,
And our most sorrowful hour but joined us the closer together.
Next Monday morning — I know it full well; for the day before happened
That most terrible fire which gave our dear town to destruction —
It will be twenty years. It was, like to-day, on a Sunday;
Hot and dry was the season, and in the place little water.
All the people were out, taking walks in their holiday clothing,
Scattered about the hamlets, and in the mills* and the taverns,
Then at the end of the town the fire commenced, and the flames ran
Quickly through the streets, with the wind themselves had created.
And the barns were burnt, with the rich and new-gathered harvest.
And the streets were burnt; right up to the market; my father
Lost his house hard by, and this one soon perished with it.
Little saved we in flight. I sat the sorrowful night through

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* The mills in Germany are generally places of refreshment.

Out of the town, on the green, taking care of the beds and the boxes.
Sleep at length fell o'er me; and when the cold of the morning,
Falling down ere the sun was up, from my slumber awoke me;
There I saw the smoke, and the flame, and the old walls and chimneys.
Then was my heart in anguish, until, more splendid than ever,
Up came the sun once more, and into my soul shed new courage.
Then I arose with haste, for I longed the spot to examine,
Where our dwelling had stood, and see if the fowls had been rescued,
Which I so fondly loved; for childish still were my feelings.
As, then, I thus stepped on, o'er the ruins of house and of homestead,
Smoking still, and so found my home, and beheld its destruction;
Thou, too, searching the spot, camest up in the other direction,
Thou hadst a horse buried there in his stall; the timbers and rubbish
Glimmering lay upon him, and naught could be seen of the poor beast.
Thoughtful thus and sad we stood o'er against one another;
For the wall was fallen which erst had divided our houses.
Then by the hand thou took'st me, and saidst: "Louisa, poor maiden,
How camest thou here? Go thy way! thou art burning thy soles in the rubbish;
For it is hot, and singes e'en these strong boots I am wearing."
And thou didst lift me up, and carry me through thine own homestead.
Still there was standing the gate of the house, with its high vaulted ceiling,

As it now stands; but that alone of all was remaining.

And thou didst set me down, and kiss me, although I forbad it.
But upon that thou spakest with kindly words full of meaning;
'See, the house lies low. Stay here, and help me to build it;
And let me help, in return, to build thy father's up likewise.'
Yet did I not understand thee, until to my father thou sentest,
And through my mother full soon the vows of glad wedlock were plighted,
Joyfully still to this day I remember the half-consumed timbers,
And still joyfully see the sun arise in his splendor:
For it was that day gave me my husband; the son of my youth was
First bestowed upon me by those wild times of destruction.
Therefore I praise thee, Hermann, that thou, with bright trust in the future,
In these sorrowful times of a maid for thyself, too, art thinking,
And hast courage to woo in the war, and over its ruins."

Quickly then the father replied, with much animation:
"Laudable is the feeling, and true, too, each word of the story,
Mother, dear, which thou hast told, for so it happened exactly;
But what is better is better. It is not becoming that each one
Should from the past be content to form his whole life and condition,
Nor should every one choose, as we did, and others before him.
Oh, how happy is he, to whom his father and mother

Leave the house well furnished, and who with success then adorns it,
Every beginning is hard,— the beginning of housekeeping hardest.
Things of many a kind man wants, and all things grow daily
Dearer; then let him in time provide for increasing his money;
And thus I cherish a hope of thee, my Hermann, that quickly
Into the house thou wilt bring thy bride with fine marriage-portions,
For a high-spirited man deserves a well-endowed maiden;
And it gives so much pleasure, when with the dear wife of his wishes
Come in the useful presents, too, in baskets and boxes?
'Tis not in vain that the mother through many a year is preparing
Linen of ample store, of web fine and strong, for her daughter.
'Tis not in vain that sponsors present their silver donations,
And that the father lays by in his desk a gold-piece, though seldom,
For in due time shall she thus delight with her goods and her presents
That young men have made her, before all others, his chosen.
Yes, I know, in her house how pleasant the dear wife must find it
Both in kitchen and parlor, to see her own furniture standing,
And herself her own bed, herself her own board, to have covered.
May I but see in the house the bride that is handsomely portioned!
For the poor one at last is only despised by her husband,
And as a servant she's treated, who, servant-like, came with a bundle.

Men continue unjust, and the season of love passeth by them.
Yes, my Hermann, thou wouldst to my age grant highest enjoyment,
If to my house ere long thou shouldst bring me a dear little daughter
From the neighborhood here,— from the house painted green over yonder.
Rich is the man, that's sure; and his trade and factories make him
Daily richer; for what does not turn to gain for the merchant?
And there are only three daughters to share his possessions amongst them.
Won already, I know, is the eldest, and promised in marriage;
But the second and third may be had, though not long may they be so.
Had I been in your place, till now I would not have tarried,
One of the girls myself to bring here, as I did your mother."

Modestly then the son to his august father made answer:
"Truly, my wish, too, was, as yours is, one of the daughters
Of our neighbor to choose; for we all were brought up together;
Round the spring in the market in former times have we sported,
And from the town-boys' rudeness I often used to protect them.
But that was long ago; and girls at length, when they grow up,
Stay, as is proper, at home and avoid such wild sportive meetings.
Well brought up they are, to be sure; still, from former acquaintance,
As you wished it, I went from time to time over yonder:

But in their conversation I never could left myself happy,
Since they would always be finding fault, which taxed my endurance.
Quite too long was my coat, the cloth was too coarse, and the color
Quite too common; and then my hair was not cut and curled rightly;
So that at last I thought of bedecking myself like the shopboys
Over there, who on Sunday are always displaying their figures,
And whose lappets in summer, half silk, hang so loosely about them.
But I observed soon enough that they always to ridicule turned me;
Which offended me much, for my pride was wounded. More deeply
Still did it vex me to find they misunderstood the kind feeling
Which I cherished for *them*, — especially Minnie, the youngest,
For I went the last time at Easter to pay them a visit,
And had donned my new coat, which now hangs up in the wardrobe,
And my hair I had got well curled, like the rest of the fellows.
When I went in they tittered; but I to myself did not take it.
At the piano sat Minnie; her father also was present,
Hearing his dear daughter sing, — entranced and in excellent spirits.
Much was expressed in the songs that surpassed my poor comprehension,
But I heard a great deal of Pamina and of Tamino;
But since I did not like to sit dumb, as soon as she finished,
Questions I asked on the words and the two chief characters in them.
Then they all at once were silent, and smiled; but the father

Said, 'Our friend, sure, with none but Adam and Eve is acquainted.'
No one then refrained, but loud was the laugh of the maidens,
Loud the laugh of the boys, while the old man held tightly his stomach.
Then I let fall my hat through embarrassment, and the rude titter
Still went on and on, in spite of the singing and playing.
Then did I hurry back to my home in shame and vexation,
Hung up my coat in the wardrobe, and drew my hair with my fingers
Down to my head, and swore never more to pass over the threshold.
And I was perfectly right; for vain they all are and loveless,
And I hear that with them my name is always Tamino."

Then replied the mother, "Thou shouldst not, Hermann, so long time
Angry be with the children, for children they are all together,
Minnie is certainly good, and for thee always showed an affection,
And but lately she asked after thee; thou oughtest to choose her."

Thoughtfully then the son replied: "I know not; that insult
Hath so deep an impression made on me that truly I wish not
At the piano again to see her, and list to her singing."

Then the father broke out, and spoke with wrathful expressions:
"Slight is the joy I receive from thee; I have ever asserted
That thou couldst show no taste but for horses and field operations,

Just what a servant does for a man of ample possessions,
That dost thou; and meanwhile the son must be missed by the father,
Who still showed himself off to his honor before all the townsmen.
Early thus with vain hope of thee did thy mother deceive me,
When in the school never progressed thy reading and writing and learning
As did that of the rest, but thy place was always the lowest.
That must happen, of course, when no ambition is stirring
In the breast of a youth, and he cares not to raise himself higher.
Had my father for me shown the care which on thee I have lavished,
Had he sent me to school, and for me engaged the best masters,
Then had I been something else than the host of the Golden Lion."

But the son rose up and approached the door in deep silence,
Slow, and without any noise; while the father, with wrath still increasing,
After him called: "Ay, begone! I know thine obstinate temper;
Go, and attend henceforth to the business, or fear my displeasure.
But never think thou wilt bring, as a daughter-in-law to thy father,
Into the house where he lives, a boorish girl and a trollop.
Long have I lived, and with men I know how to deal as I should do,
Know how to treat both ladies and gentlemen, so that they leave me
Gratined, — know how to flatter, as always is welcome to strangers.

But now at length I must find a dear daughter-in-law to assist me,
And to sweeten the toil which I still shall bear in abundance.
On the piano too, must she play to me, while are assembled,
Listening around her with pleasure, our burghers, the best and the fairest,
As on Sunday is done in the house of our neighbor." Then Hermann
Softly lifted the latch, and so went out of the parlor.

THE BURGHER.

Thus, then, the modest son escaped that passionate language;
But the father went on in the self-same way he began in:
"That which is not in man comes out of him; and I can hardly
Ever expect to bring my heart's dearest wish to fulfilment,
That my son might be, not his father's equal, but better.
For, now, what were the house, and what were the town, did not each one
Always think with desire of upholding and of renewing,
Ay, and improving too, as time and travel instruct us?
Must not man in such case grow out of the ground like a mushroom,
And as quickly decay on the spot which lately produced him,
No single vestige behind him of vital activity leaving?
Surely, one sees in a house the mind of the master as clearly
As in the town, where one walks, of the magistrate's wisdom he judgeth.
For, where the towers and the walls are falling, where in the trenches
Dirt is piled up, and dirt in all the streets, too, lies scattered!

Where the stone from the joining protrudes, with none to replace it,
Where the beam is decayed, and the house, all idle and empty,
Waits to be underpinned, afresh, — that place is ill-governed,
For, where the rulers work not for order and cleanliness always,
Easily there the townsmen to dirty sloth grow accustomed;
Just as his tattered clothes to the beggar become most familiar,
Therefore is it my wish that Hermann, my son, on a journey
Soon should set out, and at least have a sight of Strasburg and Frankfort,
And the agreeable Mannheim, with cheerful and regular outlines,
For whoever hath seen cities large and cleanly, will rest not
Till his own native town, however small, he embellish.
Do not strangers commend our gateways since their improvement,
And our whitened tower, and our church restored so completely?
Does not each one extol our pavements, and mains rich with water,
Covered and well-divided, for usefulness and for assurance
That on its first breaking out a fire might at once be kept under?
Has not all this been done since that terrible conflagration?
Six times I acted as builder, and won the praise of the Council,
And the most hearty thanks of the townsmen, for having suggested,
And by assiduous efforts completed, that good institution,
Which honest men now support, but before had left unaccomplished.

A GOOD
MESSAGE
FOR
THE
PROVO
CITY
COMMISSION

Thus at length the desire possessed each member of Council;
All alike at present exert themselves, and the new causeway
Is decided on quite, with the great high roads to connect us.
But I am much afraid our youth will not act in this manner,
Some of whom only think of the pleasure and show of the moment,
While others sit in the house, and behind the stove still are brooding;
And what I fear is to see such a character always in Hermann."

Then replied at once the good and sensible mother:
"Father, e'en so toward our son thou art ever prone to injustice;
And e'en so least of all will thy wish for his good find fulfilment.
After our own inclinations we cannot fashion our children,
But as God gave them to us, e'en so must we keep them and love them,
Training them up for the best, and then leaving each to improve it.
Gifts of one kind to one, of another belong to another;
Each one doth use them, and each is still only good and successful
In his peculiar way. Thou shalt not find fault with my Hermann,
Who, I am sure, will deserve the fortune he'll some day inherit,
And be an excellent landlord, a pattern of townsmen and farmers,
And not the last in the Council, — I see it already beforehand.
But in the poor boy's breast with thy daily blaming and scolding,
As thou hast done to-day, thou checkest all feeling of courage."

Then she left the room, and after her son quickly followed,
That, having somewhere found him, she might with soft words of kindness,
Cheer him again; for he, her excellent son, well deserved it.

When she had thus gone away, at once the father said, smiling:
"Truly a marvellous race are women — as much so as children!
Each of them loves so to live just after her own proper liking;
And one must do nothing then but always be praising and fondling,
But once for all holds good that truth-speaking proverb of old time,
'Who will not foremost go, he comes in hindmost.' So is it."

Then replied to him the druggist, with great circumspection:
"Gladly, neighbor, I grant you this, and for all that is better
Ever myself do look out, — if 'tis new without being dearer.
But is it really good, when one has not abundance of money,
Active and bustling to be, and *in* doors and *out* to be mending?
Nay, too much is the burgher kept back: increase his possessions
E'en if he could, he may not: his purse is ever too slender,
And his need is too great; and so he is always impeded.
Many a thing had I done, but the cost of such alterations
Who doest not wish to avoid? above all in times of such danger.
Long, in time past, my house in its dress of new fashion was laughing;

Long with ample panes throughout it the windows did glitter,
But does the man who in this would vie with the merchant, know also,
As *he* does, the best way to make his property greater?
Only look at the house over there — the new one; — how handsome
Shows on its ground of green each white compartment of stucco!
Large are the lights of the windows; the panes are flashing and gleaming,
So that the rest of the houses throughout the square stand in darkness,
And yet, after the fire, were *ours* at first quite the finest,
Mine with the Golden Angel, and yours with the Golden Lion.
So was my garden, too, throughout the whole neighborhood famous,
And each traveller stood, and looked through the red palisading
At the beggars in stone and the pigmies colored so gayly.
Then, when I gave a friend coffee within the glorious shell-work,
Which, to be sure, now stands all dusty and ready to tumble,
Great was the pleasure he took in the colored sheen of the mussels,
Ranged in beautiful order; and even the connoisseur, gazing,
Looked with dazzled eye on the crystals * of lead and corals.
So did the paintings, too, in the drawing-room gain admiration,
Where fine lords and ladies were taking a walk in the garden.
And with their taper-fingers the flowers were giving and holding.

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* The original word signifies properly a combination of lead and sulphur, often found in crystalline form.

Yes, who would now any more cast an eye upon that? For vexation
Scarce do I ever stir out: for all must be modern and tasteful,
As it is called,—the pails must be white, and the seats must be wooden.
All now is simple and plain; carved work and gilding no longer
Will they endure; and now foreign wood is of all things most costly.
Were I, now, so disposed to have my things newly-fashioned,
Even to go with the times, and my furniture often be changing,
Yet does every one fear to make e'en the least alterations,
For who now can afford to pay the bills of the workmen?
'Twas but lately I thought of having Michael the Angel,
Who is the sign of my shop, again embellished with gilding,
And the green dragon, too, winding under his feet; but I left him
Dingy still, as he is; for the sum that they asked quite alarmed me."

MOTHER AND SON.

Thus spake together the men in friendly converse. The mother
Went meanwhile in front of the house, to search for her Hermann
On the bench of stone, the seat he most often frequented.
When she found him not there, she went and looked in the stable,
Whither the noble steeds of high courage claimed his attention,
Which he had bought when foals, and which he entrusted to no one.
Then the servant said: "He is gone away into the garden."

Quickly then she stepped across the long double court-yard,
Left the stables behind, and the barns all built of good timber,
Into the garden went, which extended right up to the town walls;
Passed straight through it, enjoying meanwhile the bloom of each object,
Upright set the props on which the apple-trees' branches
Rested, o'erladen with fruit, and the burdened boughs of the pear-tree,
And from the strong smelling kale picked a few caterpillars in passing;
For the industrious wife takes no single step that is useless.
Thus had she come to the end of the garden, and up to the arbor,
Covered with honeysuckles; but there no more of her Hermann
Saw she, than she had seen in the garden she just now traversed,
But on the latch was left the wicket, which out of the arbor,
As an especial favor, their trusty forefather, the mayor,
Had in times gone by through the walls of the town got erected.
Thus without any trouble she passed across the dry trenches,
Where from the road close at hand went up the steep path of the vineyard,
Well enclosed, and straight to the sun's rays turning its surface,
This, too, she traversed throughout, and enjoyed the sight, while ascending,
Of the abundant grapes, beneath their leaves scarcely covered.
Shaded and roofed-in with vines was the lofty walk in the centre,
Which they ascended by steps of slab-stones rough from the quarry,

And within it were hanging Gutédel and Muscatel bunches,
Wondrous in size, and e'en then displaying tints red and purple,
Planted all with care, to the guests' dessert to add splendor.
But with single plants the rest of the vineyard was covered,
Bearing smaller grapes, from which flows wine the most costly.
Thus, then, she mounted up, with glad thoughts already of autumn,
And of that festal day when the country in jubilee gathers,
Plucking and treading the grapes, and in casks the sweet must collecting;
While, in the evening, fireworks light up each spot and each corner,
Flashing and cracking; and so full honor is paid to the vintage.
Yet she went ill at ease, when the name of her son she had shouted
Twice or thrice, and echo alone in manifold voices
From the towers of the town with great loquacity answered.
It was so strange for her to seek him; he never had wandered
Far, or he told it to her, — the cares of his dear loving mother
Thus to prevent, and her fears lest aught of ill should befall him,
And she was still in hope that on the way she should find him;
For the doors of the vineyard, the lower and also the upper,
Open alike were standing. And so the field she next entered,
With whose further slopes the back of the hill was all covered.
Still on ground of her own all the time she was treading, and pleasant

Was it for her to see her own crops and corn nodding richly,
Which over all the land with golden vigor was waving.
Right between the fields she went, on the green sward, the foot-path
Keeping still in view, and the great pear-tree on the summit,
Which was the bound of the fields her house still held in possession.
Who had planted it none could tell. Far and wide through the country
There it was to be seen, and the fruit of the tree was most famous.
'Neath it the reaper was wont to enjoy his meal in the mid-day,
And in its shade the neatherd to wait the return of his cattle,
Benches of rough stone and turf the seats they there found to sit on.
And she was not mistaken; there sat her Hermann, and rested —
Sat with his arm propped up, and seemed to gaze o'er the country
Far away tow'rd the mountain, his back turned full on his mother.
Softly she stole up to him, and shook quite gently his shoulder;
And, as he quickly turned round, she saw there were tears on his eyelids.
"Mother," he said, disconcerted, "your coming surprised me." Then quickly
Dried he up his tears — that youth of excellent feelings.
"What! thou art weeping, my son," his mother replied, with amazement,
"And must I to thy grief be a stranger? I ne'er was thus treated.
Say, what is breaking thy heart? What urges thee thus to sit lonely
Under the pear-tree here? What brings the tears to thine eyelids?"

Then the excellent youth collected himself, and thus answered:
"He who beareth no heart in his brazen bosom now feels not,
Truly, the wants of men who are driven about in misfortune:
He in whose head is no sense, in these days will take little trouble
Studying what is good for himself and the land of his fathers.
What I had seen and heard to-day filled my heart with disquiet;
And then I came up here, and saw the glorious landscape
Spreading afar, and winding around us with fruit-bearing uplands.
Saw, too, the golden fruit bowing down, as if for the reaping,
Full of promise to us of rich harvest and garners replenished.
O but, alas, how near is the foe! The Rhine's flowing waters
Are, to be sure, our guard: yet what now are waters and mountains
To that terrible people which comes on thence like a tempest?
For they are calling together from every corner the young men,
Ay, and the old, and onward are urging with might, and the masses
Shun not the face of death, but masses still press upon masses.
And does a German, alas! in his house still venture to linger?
Hopes he, forsooth, alone to escape the menacing ruin?
Dearest Mother, I tell you it fills me to-day with vexation,
That I was lately excused, when from out our townsmen were chosen
Men for the wars. To be sure, I'm the only son of my father,

And our household is large, and of great importance our business;
But were I not doing better to take my stand far out yonder
On the borders, than here to wait for affliction and bondage?
Yes, my spirit hath spoken, and in my innermost bosom
Courage and wishes are stirred, to live for the land of my fathers,
Ay, and to die, and so set a worthy example to others.
Truly, were but the might of our German youth altogether
On the borders, and leagued not an inch to yield to the stranger,
O, they should not be allowed to set foot on our glorious country,
And before our eyes consume our land's fruitful produce,
Lay their commands on our men, and rob us of wives and of maidens.
See, then, mother; within the depth of my heart I'm determined,
Quickly to do, and at once, what seems to me right and judicious;
For not always is his the best choice who thinks of it longest.
Lo! I will not return to my home from the spot that I stand on,
But go straight into town, and devote to the ranks of our soldiers
This good arm and this heart, to serve the land of my fathers.
Then let my father say if my breast by no feeling of honor
Be enlivened, and if I refuse to raise myself higher."

Then with deep meaning replied his good and intelligent mother:
Shedding the gentle tears which so readily came to her eyelids:
"Son, what change is this that hath come o'er thee and thy spirit,

That to thy mother thou speakest not, as yesterday and as ever,
Open and free to tell me what 'tis that would suit with thy wishes?
Should a third person hear thee at present discoursing, he doubtless
Would both commend thee much, and thy purpose praise, as most noble, —
Led away by thy words, and thy speech so full of deep meaning.
Yet do I only blame thee; for, lo! I know thee much better.
Thou art concealing thy heart, and thy thoughts, from thy words widely differ,
For it is not the drum, I know, nor the trumpet that calls thee,
Nor in the eyes of the girls dost thou wish to shine in regimentals.
For, whatever thy valor and courage, 'tis still thy vocation
Well to guard the house, and the field to attend to in quiet.
Wherefore tell me, with frankness, what brings thee to this resolution?"

Earnestly said the son: "You err, dear mother; one day is
Not just like another; the youth into manhood will ripen,
Better oft ripen for action in quiet, than midst all the tumult
Of a wild, roving life, which to many a youth has been fatal.
Thus, then, however calm I am, and was, in my bosom
Still hath been moulded a heart which hateth wrong and injustice.
Work, too, strength to my arm and power to my feet hath imparted.
This, I feel, is all true, and boldly I dare to maintain it.
And yet, mother, you blame me with justice, since you have caught me

Dealing with words but half true, and with half disguises of meaning,
For, let me simply confess it, it is not the coming of danger,
That from my father's house now calls me, nor thoughts great and soaring.
Succor to bring to the land of my sires, and its foes strike with terror.
All that I spoke was mere words alone, intended to cover
Those bitter feelings from thee, which my heart are tearing asunder.
O, then, leave me, my mother; for since all vain are the wishes
Cherished here in my bosom, in vain may my life, too, be wasted,
For I know that himself the individual injures
Who devotes himself, when all for the common weal strive not."

"Do but proceed," so said thereupon the intelligent mother,
"All to relate to me, the chief thing alike and the smallest.
Men are hasty, and think on the end alone; and the hasty
Easily out of their path the least impediment driveth.
But a *woman* is apt to look at the *means*, and to travel
Even by roundabout ways, and so to accomplish her purpose.
Tell me then all: what has moved thee to such excitement as never
Thou hast displayed before, — the blood in thy veins fiercely boiling,
And, in spite of thy will, the tears from thine eyes gushing thickly?"

Then the good youth to his pain his whole being surrendered, and weeping,
Weeping aloud on his mother's breast, said with deepest emotion:

"Truly, my father's words of to-day did grievously wound me,
Undeserved as they were, alike this day and all others,
For 'twas my earliest pleasure to honor my parents, and no one
Cleverer seemed, or wiser, than they whom I thanked for my being,
And for their earnest commands in the twilight season of childhood.
Much, in truth, had I then to endure from my playfellows' humors,
When for my good will to them full oft with spite they repaid me.
Many a time when struck by stone, or hand, I o'erlooked it.
But if they ever turned my father to sport, when on Sunday
Out of church he came, with step of dignified slowness;
If they e'er laughed at the band of his cap, and the flowers on his loose gown,
Which he so stately wore, and ne'er till to-day would abandon;
Fearlessly then did I clench my fist, and with furious passion
Fell I upon them, and struck and hit, with blind, reckless onset,
Seeing not where my blows fell; they howled, and with blood-dripping noses
Hardly escaped from the kicks and strokes which I dealt in my fury,
And thus grew I up, with much to endure from my father,
Who full often to me, instead of to others, spoke chiding,
When he was moved to wrath in the Council, at its last sitting;
And I still had to pay for the strifes and intrigues of his colleagues.
Ofttimes did you yourself commiserate all that I suffered,

Wishing still from my heart to serve and honor my parents,
Whose sole thought was for our sake to add to their goods and possessions,
Often denying themselves in order to save for their children.
Oh, but it is not saving alone, and tardy enjoyment,
Not heap piled upon heap, and acre still added to acre,
All so compactly enclosed, — it is not this that makes happy.
No, for the father grows old, and with him the sons, too, grow older,
Void of joy for to-day, and full of care for to-morrow.
Look down there, and say how rich and fair to the vision
Lies yon noble expanse, and beneath it the vineyard and garden,
Then the barns and stables, — fair ranges of goodly possessions.
Further on still I see the house-back, where, in the gable,
Peeping under the roof my own little room shows its window.
And I reflect on the times when there the moon's late appearing
Many a night I awaited, and many a morning the sunrise,
When my sleep was so sound that only a few hours were sufficient.
Ah! all seems to me now as lonely as that little chamber, —
House, and garden, and glorious field outstretched on the hillside,
All lies so dreary before me: I want a partner to share it."

Then replied to him his good and intelligent mother:
"Son, thou dost not more wish to lead a bride to thy chamber,
That the night may yield thee a lovely half of existence,

And the work of the day be more free and more independent,
Than thy father and I, too, wish it. We always advised thee,
Ay, and have urged thee also, to make thy choice of a maiden.
Yet do I know it well, and my heart this moment repeats it,
That till the right hour come, and with the right hour the right maiden
Make her appearance, this choice must remain still in the distance,
And in most cases meanwhile fear urges to catch at the wrong one.
If I must tell thee, my son, I believe thou hast chosen already;
Since thy heart is smitten, and sensitive more than is common.
Speak it then plainly out, for thy soul already declares it;
Yonder maiden is she, — the exile, — whom thou hast chosen."

"Dearest mother, thou sayest it," the son then quickly made answer.
"Yes, it is she; and unless as my bride,* this day I may bring her
Home to our house, she goes on, and perhaps will vanish forever,
In the confusion of war and sad journeyings hither and thither.
Then ever vainly for me our rich possessions will prosper,
And for these eyes ever vainly the years to come will be fruitful.
Yes, the familiar house and the garden become my aversion,
Ah! and the love of his mother, e'en that her poor son fails to comfort.

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* The titles of "bride" and "bridegroom" are given in Germany to persons who are only engaged to be married.

For love loosens,I feel, all other ties in the bosom,
When it makes fast her own; nor is it only the maiden
That leaves father and mother to follow the youth she has chosen;
But the youth, too, knows no more of mother and father,
When he sees his maiden, his only beloved, go from him.
Wherefore let me depart where desperation now drives me;
For my father hath spoken the words that must needs be decisive.
And his house is no longer mine, if from it the maiden,
Whom alone I wish to bring home, by him is excluded."

Quickly then replied the good and sensible mother;
"Two men, surely, stand like rocks in stern opposition;
Still unmoved and proud will neither advance toward the other;
Neither move his tongue the first to words of good feeling,
Wherefore I tell thee, son, in my heart the hope is still living,
That if she be but worthy and good, to thee he'll betroth her
Though she is poor, and he the poor hath so stoutly forbidden.
Many a thing he says, in his passionate way, which he never
Cares to perform; and so it may be with this his refusal.
But he demands a soft word, and may with reason demand it;
For he's thy father. We know, too, that after dinner his anger
Makes him more hastily speak, and doubt the motives of others,

Giving no reason; for wine the whole strength of his hot wilful temper
Then stirs up, nor lets him attend to what others are saying;
Only for what he says himself has he hearing or feeling,
But the evening is now coming on, and long conversations
Have ere this been exchanged by him and his friendly companions.
Gentler, I'm sure, he must be, when the fumes of the wine have now left him,
And he feels the injustice he showed so keenly to others.
Come! let us venture at once; naught speeds like the quickly-tried venture;
And we require the friends who now sit with him assembled;
But, above all, the support of our worthy pastor will help us."

Quickly thus she spoke, and herself from the bench of stone rising,
Drew, too, her son from his seat, who willingly followed. In silence
Both descended the hill, on their weighty purpose reflecting.

THE CITIZENS OF THE WORLD.

Meanwhile sat the three still incessantly talking together,
With the pastor the druggist, and each by the side of the landlord.
Ay, and the theme of their talk was still the selfsame as ever,
Carried backwards and forwards, and well examined on all sides.
Then the excellent vicar replied, with worthy reflections;
"I will not contradict you. I know man must ever be striving

After improvement, and still, as we see, he will also be striving
After what is higher; at least he seeks something novel.
But ye must not go too far. For close by the side of this feeling
Nature hath also given the wish to linger mid old things,
And to enjoy the presence of what has long been familiar.
Each condition is good that is sanctioned by nature and reason.
Man wisheth much for himself, and yet he wanteth but little;
For his days are but few, and his mortal sphere is contracted.
Ne'er do I blame the man, who, constantly active and restless,
Urged on and on, o'er the sea and along each path of the mainland
Passes busy and bold, and enjoyment finds in the profits
Which are so richly heaped up, alike round himself and his children.
But *that* character, too, I esteem, — the good quiet yeoman,
Who with tranquil steps o'er the fields which his sires left behind them
Walks about, and attends to the ground, as the hours may require him.
Not for him each year is the soil still altered by culture;
Not for him does the tree, newly planted, with hastiest increase
Stretch forth its boughs to heaven with blossoms most richly embellished.
No, the man has need of patience, — has need, too, of simple
Quiet, unvarying plans, and an intellect plain and straightforward.
Small is the measure of seed he commits to the earth which supports him,

Few are the beasts he is taught to raise by his system of breeding;
For what is useful is still the only object he thinks of.
Happy the man to whom nature hath given a mind so decided!
He supporteth us all. And joy to the small town's good burgher,
Who with the countryman's trade the trade of the burgher uniteth.
On him lies not the pressure which cripples the countryman's efforts;
Nor is he crazed by the care of the townsmen with many requirements,
Who, though scanty their means, with those who are richer and higher
Ever are wont to vie, — most of all their wives and their maidens,
Bless, then, forever, say I, the tranquil pursuits of thy Hermann,
And of the like-minded partner who by him will some day be chosen."

Thus he spake; and just then came in with her son the good mother,
Whom she led by the hand, and placed in front of her husband.
"Father," said she, "how oft have we thought, when chatting together,
Of that jovial day which would come, when Hermann hereafter,
Choosing a bride for himself, completed at length our enjoyment;
Backward and forward then ran our thoughts; now this one, now that one,
Was the maiden we fixed on for him, in converse parental.
Now, then, that day is come; now heaven itself hath before him
Brought and pointed out his bride, and his heart hath decided,
Did we not always then say he should choose for himself unrestricted,

Didst thou not just now wish that his feelings might for some maiden
Clear and lively be? Now is come the hour that you wished for;
Yes, he hath felt, and chosen, and come to a manly decision.
That is the maiden, — the stranger — the one who met him this morning:
Give her him; or, he hath sworn, he remains in single condition."

Then spake to him his son: "Yes, give her me, Father; my heart hath
Clearly and surely chosen; you'll find her an excellent daughter."

But the father was silent. Then, rising quickly, the pastor
Took up the talking, and said: "A single moment doth settle
All concerning man's life, and concerning the whole of his fortune.
After the longest counsel, yet still each single decision
Is but a moment's work; but the wise man alone takes it rightly,
Perilous is it always, in choosing, this thing and that thing
Still to consider besides, and so bewilder the judgment.
Hermann is clear in his views, from his youth long ago have I known him,
E'en as a boy, he stretched not his hands after this thing and that thing,
But what he wished did always become him, and firmly he held it.
Be not alarmed and astonished, that now at once is appearing
What you so long have wished. 'Tis true that just now that appearance
Wears not the form of the wish which by you so long hath been cherished;
For from ourselves our wishes will hide what we wish; while our blessings

Come to us down from above in the form that is proper to each one.
Then misjudge not the maid, who the soul first woke to emotion
In your well-beloved son, so good and so sensible likewise.
Happy is that man to whom her hand by his first love is given,
And whose fondest wish in his heart unseen doth not languish.
Yes, I see by his look, his future lot is decided.
Youth to full manhood at once is brought by a genuine passion.
He is no changeling; I fear, that if this maid you deny him,
All his best years will then be lost in a life of deep sorrow."

Quickly then replied the druggist, so full of discretion,
From whose lips the words to burst forth, long had been ready:
"Let us still only adopt the middle course in this juncture,
'Speed with slow heed!' 'twas the plan pursued e'en by Cæsar Augustus.
Gladly I give up myself to serve the neighbor I value,
And for his use exert the best of my poor understanding;
And above all does youth stand in need of some one to guide it.
Let me, then, go yonder, and I will examine the maiden,
And will question the people with whom she lives, and who know her.
No one will easily cheat me; on words I can put the true value."

Then with wingéd words the son immediately answered:
"Do so, neighbor, and go, and inquire. At the same time my wish is
That our respected vicar should also be your companion;

Two such excellent men will bear unimpeachable witness.
Oh! my father, she hath not run wantonly hither, — that maiden;
She is not one through the country to whisk about on adventures,
And to ensnare with her tricks the inexperienced youngster.
No, but the savage doom of that all-ruinous conflict,
Which is destroying the world, and many a firmly-built structure
Hath from the ground up-torn, this poor maid also hath banished.
Are not noble men of high birth now roving in exile?
Princes fly in disguise, and kings are doomed to live outlawed.
Ah! and so, too, is she, the best of all her good sisters,
Out of our country driven; and her own misfortune forgetting,
Aids she the wants of others, and though without help, yet is helpful.
Great are the woe and the need which over the earth are now spreading;
Should not, then, from misfortune like this some good fortune follow?
And should I not, in the arms of my bride, my trustworthy partner,
Reap good fruits from the war, as you from the great conflagration?"

Then replied the father, and spake with words full of meaning:
"How now, my son, hath thy tongue been loosed, which many a long year
Stuck to thy mouth, and moved in speech but on rarest occasions?
But I must prove to-day, the doom which threatens each father
That the passionate will of the son is favored right gladly
By the all-gentle mother, supported by each of her neighbors;

If but the father be made an object of blame, or the husband.
But I will not resist you, thus banded together; what good were it?
For, in truth, I see here beforehand defiance and weeping.
Go, and examine, and with you, in God's name, bring me my daughter
Home to my house; if not, he may then think no more of the maiden."

Thus the sire. Then exclaimed the son, with features so joyous:
"Now before night shall you have an excellent daughter provided,
E'en as the man must wish, in whose breast lives a mind full of prudence.
Happy will be, too, then my good maiden, — I venture to hope so.
Yes, she will ever thank me for having both father and mother
Given her back in you, as sensible children would have them.
But I must tarry no more; I'll go and harness the horses
Quickly, and take out with me our friends on the track of my loved one,
Then leave it all to the men themselves and their own good discernment;
Whose decision, I swear, I will entirely abide by,
And never see her again, until she is mine — that sweet maiden."
Thus went he out. Meanwhile the others were weighing with wisdom
Many a point, and quickly discussing each matter of moment.

Hermann, then, to the stables sped, where the high-mettled horses
Quietly standing, their feed of clean white oats were enjoying,
And their well-dried hay, that was cut in the best of the meadows.

Quickly, then in their mouths he put the bright bits of their bridles,
Drew at once the straps through the buckles handsomely placed,
Then the long broad reins to the bridle fastening securely
Led the horses out to the yard, where the quick willing servant,
Guiding it well by the pole, the coach had already drawn forward,
Then with ropes so clean, and fitted exactly in measure,
Fastened they to the bar the might of the swift-drawing horses.
Hermann took the whip, sat down, and drove to the gateway,
And as soon as the friends their roomy places had taken
Speedily rolled on the carriage, and left the pavement behind them,
Left behind them the walls of the town and the towers whitely shining.
Thus drove Hermann on to the causeway now so familiar,
Quickly, and did not loiter, but still drove up hill and down hill.
But when once again he descried the tower of the village,
And at no distance once more lay the houses garden-surrounded;
Then he thought with himself it was time to pull in the horses.

Shaded by linden trees, which, in worthy pride high-exalted,
Had for hundreds of years on the spot already been rooted,
There was a wide-spreading space of green sward in front of the village,
Where the peasants and burghers from neighboring towns met for pleasure.
There, beneath the trees, was a well at slight depth from the surface.

As one went down the steps, the eye did light on stone benches,
Placed all round the spring, which still welled forth living waters,
Pure, and enclosed in low walls, for the comfort of those who were drawing,
There, beneath the trees, to stay with the carriage and horses
Hermann now determined, and thus addressed his companions:
"Step now forth, my friends, and go, and gain information,
Whether, indeed, the maid be worthy the hand which I offer.
Truly I think it, and so ye would bring me no new and strange tidings.
Had I to act for myself, I would go straight on to the village,
And with words short and few the good girl should decide on my fortune,
And amongst all the rest you will soon be able to know her;
For it were hard, indeed, for any to match her in figure.
But I will give you, further, some marks from her dress clean and simple.
Red is the bodice that gives support to the swell of her bosom,
Well laced up; and black is the jacket that tightly lies o'er it;
Neat the chemise's border is plaited in form of a collar,
Which encircles her chin, so round with the charms of its whiteness;
Freely and fairly her head displays its elegant oval;
Twisted strongly and oft are her plaits round hair-pins of silver;
Full and blue is the skirt which beneath the bodice commences,
And, as she walks along, flaps round her neatly-shaped ankles.
One thing still will I say, and from you expressly request it;

Do not speak to the maiden, nor let your purpose be noticed;
But you must question the others, and listen to all they may tell you.
When you get tidings sufficient to quiet my father and mother,
Then come back to me, and we'll think of our further proceedings.
This is what I planned on the way, as we drove along hither."

Thus he spake. But his friends forthwith went on to the village,
Where in gardens, and barns, and houses the mass of people
Crowded, while cart upon cart along the wide road was standing.
There to the lowing cattle and teams the men gave attention;
On all the hedges the women their clothes were busily drying;
And in the brook's shallow water the children delighted to dabble.
Thus they went pressing on through wagons, through men, and through cattle,
Looking about right and left, as spies despatched for the purpose,
Whether they might not descry the form of the girl they had heard of;
But not one of them all seemed to be that excellent maiden.
Soon they found the crush become greater. There, round the wagons,
Threatening men were at strife, while the women mixed with them screaming.
Quickly then an elder, with steps full of dignity walking,
Up to the brawlers came, and at once the hubbub was silenced,
As he commanded peace, and with fatherly earnestness threatened.
"Hath not misfortune," he cried, "e'en yet so tamed our fierce spirits,

That we should understand at length, and bear with each other,
Living in peace, — though not each one by this rule metes out his conduct?
Careless of peace, to be sure, is the prosperous man; but shall trouble
Fail to teach us, no more, as erst with our brother to quarrel.
Nay, to each other give place on the stranger's soil, and together
Share what ye have, that so ye may meet with compassion from others?"

Such were the words of the man, and they all in silence and concord,
Thus appeased once more, arranged their cattle and wagons,
When now the clergymen heard the speech which the elder had spoken,
And the pacific views of the stranger judge had discovered,
Straight up to him he went, and addressed him with words full of meaning:
"Father,' tis true that when men live in prosperous days in their country,
Gaining their food from the earth, which far and wide opes her bosom,
And through years and months renews the gifts that they wish for,
All then comes of itself, and each in his own eyes is wisest,
Ay, and best; and this is their standing, one with another,
And the most sensible man is esteemed but the same as his neighbor;
Since in quiet proceeds, as if of itself, all that happens,
But should distress disturb the usual modes of existence,
Tear the buildings down, and root up the garden and cornfield,
Drive the man and his wife from the site of their dwelling familiar,

And, as wanderers, drag them through days and nights full of anguish;
Ah! then look they around for the man of the best understanding,
And no longer he utters his excellent words to no purpose.
Tell me, father; you are, no doubt, the judge of these exiles,
Who so quickly did shed the calm of peace o'er their spirits.
Yes, you appear to me as one of those leaders of old-time,
Who the exiled people through deserts and wanderings guided;
Surely, methinks I am talking with Joshua, if not with Moses."

Then with earnest look the judge addressed him in answer,
"Truly, our times may compare with those of rarest occurrence
Noted in history's page, alike the profane and the sacred,
He who in days like these his life but from yesterday reckons,
Hath already lived years: so crowd the events in each story.
If but a short way back I travel in thought, on my head seems
Gray-haired age to be lying; and yet my strength is still lively.
Oh, we may well compare ourselves with those others so famous,
Who, in solemn hour, in the fiery bush saw appearing
God, the Lord; to us, too, in clouds and fire He appeareth."
While now the vicar was fain the discourse still further to lengthen,
Longing to hear from the man his own and his countrymen's fortunes,
Quickly with whispered words in his ear observed his companion:

"Talk on still with the judge, and turn the discourse on the maiden,
While I am walking about to look for her; and I will come back,
Soon as I find her." The vicar, with nod, expressed his approval,
And through the hedges, and gardens, and sheds the spy began seeking.

THE AGE.

When the clergyman thus to the stranger judge put his questions,
What were his people's woes, and how long from their land they were driven;
Then the man replied: "Of no short date are our troubles;
For of continuous years the bitter dregs we have drunken,
All the more dreadful, because our fairest hopes were then blasted.
For, indeed, who can deny that his heart was highly elated,
And in his freer bosom far clearer pulses were beating,
When first rose o'er the world that new-born sun in its splendor,
When we heard of the rights of man, which to all were now common,
Heard how freedom inspired, and equality won the world's praises?
Then did each man hope to live for himself; and the fetters,
Deemed to be loosed, which had thrown their links over many a country,
And in the land of sloth and selfishness long were held tightly.
Did not each man look, in those days of pressing excitement,
Towards the city which long the world its capital reckoned,
And which now more than ever deserved the magnificent title?

Were not, too, those men who first proclaimed the good tidings
Equal in name to the highest beneath the stars up in heaven?
Did not every man's mind, and spirit, and language, grow greater?

And, as their neighbors, we first were fired with lively emotion.
Then the war began, and the columns of newly-armed Frenchmen
Nearer drew; but they seemed to bring with them nothing but friendship.
Ay, and they brought it, too; for the souls of them all were elated,
And for all with pleasure they planted the gay tree of freedom,
Promising each man his own, and that each should be his own ruler.
Great was then the enjoyment of youth, and great that of old age.
And the gay merry dance began around the new standard.
Thus did they quickly win — those Frenchmen surpassing in talent —
First the souls of our men by their fiery reckless adventure,
Then our women's hearts by their irresistible graces.
Light we deemed e'en the pressure of war, with its wants great and many;
Since, before our eyes, bright hope hovered over the distance,
And allured on and on our look to the new-opened courses.

Oh! how glad is the time, when along with his bride the gay bridegroom
Lightly trips in the dance, his longed-for marriage awaiting!
But more glorious still was the time, when the loftiest objects
Man can think of appeared nigh at hand, and of easy attainment.

Then was every one's tongue untied, and loudly they uttered,
Gray-beards, and men, and youths, their high intentions and feelings.

But the heavens were clouded too soon; for the prize of dominion,
Strove a corrupted race, unmeet to produce what was noble.
Then they slew one another, and crushed with the yoke of oppression,
Then new neighbors and brothers, and sent forth the self-seeking masses.
And amongst us the high were debauching and robbing by wholesale,
And the low were debauching and robbing, e'en down to the lowest;
Each man seemed not to care, if but something were left for the morrow.
Great, indeed, was our need; and greatly increased our oppression;
No one heeded our cry; of the day they were absolute masters.
Then fell vexation and rage upon even the tranquillest spirit;
Each one but thought and swore for all his wrongs to take vengeance,
And for the bitter loss of his hope thus doubly defrauded.
Fortune changed at length to the side of the suffering Germans,
And with hasty marches the Frenchman fled back tow'rd his country.
Ah! but never till then did we feel the sad doom of warfare!
Great, and generous, too, is the victor, — at least he appears so, —
And he doth spare, as one of his own, the man he has vanquished,
When he is daily of use, and with all his property serves him.

But the fugitive knows no law, if but death he may ward off;
And without any regard he quickly destroys what is precious,
Since his spirit is heated, and desperation brings forward
Out of the depth of his heart each lurking villainous purpose.
Naught thinks he sacred now, but he robs it. His wildness of passion
Rushes by force upon woman, and takes a delight in all horrors.
All around he sees death, and in cruelty spends his last moments.
Finding enjoyment in blood, and in misery's loud lamentations.

Wrathful then in our men rose up the spirit of daring,
Both to avenge the lost, and to save their remaining possessions.
All then seized on their arms, allured by the haste of the flying,
And by their faces so pale, and their looks so timid and doubtful.
Ceaselessly now rang out the sound of the sullen alarm-bell,
Nor did the danger before them repress their furious courage.
Quickly into weapons the peaceful tools of the farmer
Now were turned; with blood the fork and scythe were all dripping.
None showed grace to the foe in his fall, and none showed forbearance.
Everywhere raved courage or weakness malignant as timid,
O may I never again in such contemptuous madness
Look upon man! The beast in his rage is a pleasanter object.
Ne'er let him speak of freedom as though himself he could govern!

Loosed from their bands appear, when the checks are gone that restrained them,
All bad things, which the law into holes and corners had driven."

"Excellent sir," replied the vicar, with emphasis speaking,
"If you have misjudged man, I cannot on that account blame you.
Evil enough, to be sure, have you borne from that wild undertaking.
Still, if you would but look once more through the days of your sorrow,
You would yourself confess, how often you saw what was good, too,
Many an excellent thing, which remains in the heart deeply hidden,
Should not danger incite it, and man by need be pressed forward
E'en as an angel, or guardian-god, to seem to his neighbor."

Smiling then replied the judge so aged and worthy:
"Sensibly do you remind me, as oft, when a house has been burnt down,
Men to the owner recall in his sadness the gold and the silver,
Which, though molten and scattered, lies still preserved in the rubbish;
Little it is, to be sure, but even that little is precious,
And the poor man digs for it, and when he has found it rejoices.
And just so am I glad to turn my thoughts, full of brightness,
Back to those few good deeds which memory still loves to cherish.
Yes, I have seen, I will not deny it, foes joining in concord.
That they might save the town from threatening evil; seen friends, too,
And dear parents and children on what was impossible venture;

Seen the stripling at once grow up into manhood, — the gray-beard
Young once more, — and e'en the child into stripling develop;
Ay, and the weaker sex, as 'tis our custom to call it,
Show itself valiant and strong, and for presence of mind justly famous.
Thus let me now relate, above all, that action most noble,
Which with high soul a maiden performed, — the excellent virgin —
Who in the large farm-house stayed behind along with the young girls;
Since the men had all gone, like the rest, to fight with the strangers.
Then came into the yard a troop of wandering rabble,
Bent upon plunder, and quickly rushed into the women's apartment.
There they marked the form of the well-grown beautiful maiden
And those lovely girls, — or, to call them more properly, children,
Then, with wild passion possessed, they made an assault without feeling,
On that trembling band and on the magnanimous maiden.
But from the side of one she instantly tore the bright sabre,
Brought it down with might, and before her feet he fell bleeding.
Then with manly strokes the girl she valiantly rescued,
Wounding four more of the robbers, though these escaped death by flying;
Then she secured the yard, and with weapon in hand waited succor."

When the clergyman thus had heard the praise of the maiden,
Hope for the friend he loved at once mounted high in his bosom;

And he was on the point of asking her subsequent fortunes,
Whether along with the people she now were in sorrowful exile.

But with hasty steps just then the druggist came to them,
Pulled the clergyman's arm, and with whispered words thus addressed him:
"Surely at last I have found the maid out of many a hundred,
As the description ran! So come yourself to behold her,
And bring with you the judge to tell us still further about her."
Purposing this they turned; but the judge meanwhile had been summoned
By his own people away, who, in want of counsel, required him.
But the vicar at once prepared to follow the druggist,
Up to the gap in the hedge; and the latter, cunningly pointing,
Said: "Do you see her, — the maiden? The doll she has swaddled already,
And well enough do I know, now I see it again, the old satin,
And the old cushion-cover, which Hermann brought in the bundle.
These are significant marks, and the rest are all in accordance.
For the red bodice affords support to the swell of her bosom,
Well laced up; and there lies the jacket of black tightly o'er it;
Neat the chemise's border is plaited in form of a collar,
Which encircles her chin so round with the charms of its whiteness;
Freely and fairly her head displays its elegant oval;
And the thick plaits are twisted and fastened round hair-pins of silver.

Though she is sitting, we still can see the height of her stature,
And the blue skirt, which in full and numerous folds from the bosom
Gracefully waves below, and extends to her neatly-shaped ankle.
Without doubt it is she. So come that we may examine
Whether she virtuous be and good, — a maiden domestic."

Then the vicar replied as he looked at the sitting girl keenly,
"That she enchanted the youth is to me, most surely, no wonder;
For she stands proof to the eye of the man of finest perception.
Happy to whom mother-nature a pleasing person hath given!
It doth commend him always, and nowhere is he a stranger;
Each one likes to be near him, and each one would gladly detain him,
If but the grace of his manner to that of his person be suited.
Be well assured the youth has succeeded in finding a maiden
Who o'er the future days of his life will shed glorious lustre,
And with the truth and vigor of woman at all times support him.
Thus, sure, perfection of body the soul also keepeth in brightness,
And thus a vigorous youth of a happy old age still gives promise."

But to that made reply the druggist, inclined to be doubtful;
"Yet doth appearance more often deceive; I trust not the outside;
Since in times past so oft I have proved the truth of the proverb,

'Ere thou hast eaten a bushel of salt with thy new-made acquaintance,
Lightly thou must not trust him; 'tis time alone can assure thee,
What thy position is with him, and what thy friendship's endurance.'
Let us, then, first address to honest people some questions,
Who both know the maid, and will give us intelligence of her."

"I, too, approve of foresight," the pastor replied, as he followed,
"Nor do we woo for ourselves; and wooing for others is ticklish."
And upon that they went to meet the good judge, who was coming
Back again up the road, intent, as before, on his business.
Then the vicar at once addressed him with words of precaution:
"Say! we have seen a maiden, who, in the garden close by here,
Under the apple-tree sits, and makes up clothing for children
Out of some worn out satin, received, I suppose, as a present.
We were well pleased with her form; she seems one of those full of spirit.
What, then, you know of her, tell us; we ask from a laudable motive."

When now the judge straightway went into the garden to see her,
"Nay, ye know her," he said, "already; for when I related
Of the most noble deed which that young maiden accomplished,
When she seized the sword, and herself and those with her defended.
This was she! You may see by her look that robust is her nature

But as good as strong; for she nursed her aged relation
Up to the day of his death, when torn away by affliction
For the distress of the town, and fear for his threatened possessions.
Ay, and with silent courage she bore her heart's bitter anguish
At her bridegroom's death, who, a youth of generous feeling, —
In the first glow of high thoughts, for precious freedom to struggle,
Even departed to Paris, and terrible death soon encountered ;
For, as at home, so there he opposed the tyrant and plotter."
Thus, then, spake the judge. With thanks both were going to leave him,
When the pastor drew forth a gold piece (the silver already
Had, some hours before, left his purse in kind distribution,
When he saw the poor exiles in sorrowful crowds passing by him),
And to the judge he held it out, and said: "This poor farthing
Share thou amongst the needy, and God to the gifts grant an increase!"
Yet did the man refuse, and said: "Nay, but many a dollar
And much clothing and stuff from the wreck of our fortunes we rescued,
And shall again, I trust, go back before all is exhausted."

Then replied the vicar, and into his hand pressed the money,
"No one should wait to give in these days of trouble, and no one
Should refuse to accept what to him in kindness is offered.

No one knows how long he may hold his peaceful possessions,
No one how long still in foreign lands he may wander,
And be without the field and the garden, which ought to maintain him."

"Ay, indeed," then observed the druggist, that keen man of business,
"Did now my pocket but hold any money, you quickly should have it,
Large coin or small alike; for your people's wants must be many.
Yet will I not let you go without a gift; that my wishes
Still may be seen, however the deed may fall short of the wishes."
Thus he spake, and forward the leathern pouch well embroidered
Drew by the string, in which was kept his tobacco, and opening,
Nicely shared it with him; and many a pipeful was found there.
"Small is the gift," he added; to which the judge quickly answered,
"Nay, but good tobacco to travellers ever is welcome."
And upon that the druggist began to praise his Kanaster.

But the good vicar then drew him away, and the judge they now quitted.
"Haste we," said the man of good sense; "the youngster is waiting
Painfully; let him then hear with all possible speed the good tidings."

So they hastened and came, and found their young friend on the carriage
Leaning there beneath the lindens. The horses were stamping
Wildly upon the turf, and he held them in check, and stood thoughtful,

Silently looking before him, nor saw his friends till the moment
When they came to him with shouts and signs of their gladly returning,
Even when still at a distance the druggist began to address him ;
Yet still they approached unperceived. Then his hand the good vicar
Seized, and said, thus snatching away the word from his comrade:
"Joy to thee now, young man! Thine eye and thy heart truly guided
Rightly have chosen. Good luck to thee and thy youth's blooming partner.
Worthy is she of thee! Then come and turn round the carriage,
That we may drive with all speed, till we come to the end of the village,
And, having wooed her, at once may take to your house the good maiden."

Yet did the youth stand still, and without any tokens of pleasure
Heard the messenger's word, though of heavenly power to give comfort.
Then with a deep sigh he said: "We came with hurrying carriage,
And we shall drive back home, perhaps, with shame and full slowly.
For, while waiting here, a load of care hath come o'er me,
Doubt and suspicion, and all that afflicts a lover's heart only.
Think ye, that if we but go, the maiden will surely come with us,
Since we are rich, and she a poor and wandering exile?
Poverty, undeserved, e'en makes men prouder. Contented
Seems the maiden and active, and so has the world at her summons.
Think ye there ever grew up a woman of beauty and feeling

Such as hers, without luring some good youth on to adore her?
Think ye she hath not yet her heart to love ever opened?
Go not thither so fast; we might, to our shame and confusion
Turn back slowly home our horses. The fear doth possess me
That some youth owns her heart, and the excellent maiden already
Hath both plighted her hand and her true love breathed to that blessed one.
Ah! then, indeed, shall I stand before her ashamed of my offer."

To console him the vicar his mouth already had opened,
But, in his talkative way, his companion did thus interrupt him:
"Surely in former times we should not have thus been embarrassed,
When in its own proper way each business was brought to completion.
Then, if e'er for their son a bride the parents had chosen,
First a friend of the house in whom they trusted was summoned.
He, then, as wooer was sent, and begged to confer with the parents
Of the selected bride; and, dressed in his finest apparel,
After dinner on Sunday he paid the good burgher a visit,
Interchanging with him at first on general topics
Friendly words, and well skilled to direct and lead round the subject.
After much beating about, the daughter was at length commended,
And the man and his house from whom he received his commission.
Sensible people perceived his object; the sensible envoy

Soon perceived their wishes, and might explain himself further.
If they disliked the offer, there then was no painful refusal.
But if it proved successful, the wooer was then ever after
First to be seen in the house at each domestic rejoicing:
For the good married couple their whole life through did remember
That the first knots were tied by the hands commissioned to tie them.
But all that is now, with other such excellent customs,
Quite gone out of fashion, and each for himself is the wooer.
Wherefore let each himself in person receive the refusal
Destined for him, and stand with shame before the proud maiden."

"Be it e'en as it may!" replied the youth, who had scarcely
Heard all the words, and in silence had formed his own resolution.
"I will in person go, and in person learn what my doom is,
Out of the maiden's mouth, in whom my trust is the greatest
Man ever yet toward woman within his bosom did cherish.
What she says, must be true, and according to reason; I know it.
If for the last time now I must see her, yet once, and once only,
Will I the open gaze of that black eye go to encounter,
Though to my heart she may ne'er be pressed, yet that breast and those shoulders
Will I yet once more see, which my arm so longs to encircle;
Once more will see that mouth, from which one kiss and one 'Yes' would

Make me happy forever,—one 'No' forever undo me.
But now leave me alone; you must not wait, but returning,
Go to my father and mother, that they may learn from your story
That their son did not err, and that there is worth in the maiden.
And so leave me alone. By the footpath over the hillside
Will I go back by a nearer way. And, O that my dear one
I may with joy and speed lead home! But perhaps by that footpath
I may slink lonely home, and never again tread it gladly."

Thus he spake, and put the reins in the hand of the vicar,
Who received them with skill and command o'er the foam-covered horses,
Quickly mounted the carriage, and sat in the seat of the driver.
But thou still didst tarry, thou prudent neighbor, and saidest:
"Gladly, my friend, with soul, and mind, and heart, would I trust thee;
But thy body and limbs are not preserved most securely,
When to the secular rein the ghostly hand makes pretension."

But thou didst smile at that, thou sensible vicar, and saidest:
"Take but your seat, and your body commit to me, e'en as your spirit.
Long ago has this hand been trained to wield the reins deftly,
And this eye is well skilled to hit the turn most artistic.
For 'twas our custom at Strasburg to drive full oft in the carriage,
When I accompanied thither our good young barons; and daily

Rolled through the sounding gateway our carriage, with me as the driver,
Out on the dusty roads, far away to the meadows and lime-trees,
Right through the midst of the crowds who the livelong day spend in walking."

Half assured, upon that, the druggist mounted the carriage,
Sitting as one who prepared a prudent leap to accomplish;
And the steeds galloped home, with thoughts intent on the stable.
Under their powerful hoofs were clouds of dust streaming upward.
Long stood the youth there yet, and watching the dust as it mounted,
Watched it still as it fell, and stood devoid of reflection.

DOROTHEA.

As the traveller, ere the sun sank below the horizon,
Fixed once more his eyes on the orb now fast disappearing,
Then in darkling copse and along the side of the mountain
Sees its hovering form, and where'er his glance he now turneth,
There it speeds on, and shines, and wavers in glorious colors;
So before Hermann's eyes did the lovely form of the maiden
Softly move on, and seemed in the path to the cornfield to follow.
But from his dream of rapture he woke, and slowly proceeded
Toward the village, and then was enraptured again, for again came,
Meeting him there in the way, the glorious maiden's tall figure,
Closely he marked her, — it was no ghost, but her own very person,

Bearing in either hand her larger jug by the handle,
And a smaller one, thus she walked to the well, full of business.
Joyfully went he up to meet her; the sight of her gave him
Courage and strength; and thus he spake to his wondering dear one:
"Do I then find thee here, brave maiden, so soon again busy,
Helping others, and gladly still comforting all that is human?
Say, why comest thou alone to the spring, which lies at such distance,
While with the village water the others all are contented?
This, I suppose, must be of particular virtue and flavor.
Perhaps to that sick woman, so faithfully rescued, thou bearest it."

Then the good maiden at once, with friendly greeting, thus answered:
"Surely my coming thus here to the well is already rewarded,
Since I find the good youth who before with so much supplied us;
For, as the gifts themselves, the sight of the giver is pleasant.
Come now, and see for yourself, who hath reaped the fruits of your kindness;
And receive the calm thanks of all to whom you gave comfort.
But, that you now may learn at once my object in coming
Here to draw, where the spring flows pure and ever increasing,
This is the reason I give. Our thoughtless men in the village
Everywhere have disturbed the water, with horses and oxen,
Trampling right through the spring which supplied the whole population.

Just in the same way, too, have they soiled, with washing and cleaning,
All the troughs in the village, and all the wells have corrupted;
For to provide with all speed for himself and the want next before him,
This alone each man studies, and thinks not of what may come after."

Thus she spake, and then at once to the broad steps descended
With her companion, and there they sat them both on the low wall,
Down to the spring. To draw the water she then did lean over;
And of the other jug he laid hold, and leant over likewise;
And their mirrored forms they saw in the bright blue of heaven,
Hov'ring with nods to each other, and greeting, like friends, in the mirror.
"Let me drink," then said the youth in the joy of his feelings;
And she held him the jug. Then both of them trustingly rested,
Leaning over the vessels; and then her friend she thus questioned:
"Say, how find I thee here, without the carriage and horses,
Far away from the spot where I saw thee at first? What has brought thee?"

Thoughtfully Hermann looked on the ground, then raised up his glances
Quickly tow'rds the girl, and with friendly gaze in her dark eye
Felt himself calm and assured. Yet to speak of love to her now was
Put quite out of his power; her eye not love was now looking,
But clear sense, and demanded such sense in their whole conversation.

Thus he was soon collected, and said with confidence to her:
"Let me speak, my child, and give a reply to your question.
It was for you I came here; and why should I wish to conceal it?
For with both my parents, who love me, I live and am happy,
Faithfully helping them manage their house and other possessions,
As their only son; and manifold are our employments.
All the fields are my care, — the house my diligent father's, —
And my active mother gives life to the whole of the business.
But thou hast doubtless, like others, observed how sorely the servants,
Whether through lack of thought, or of honesty, trouble the mistress,
Ever compelled to change, and take one fault for another,
Wherefore my mother long wished in her house to keep such a servant
As not with hand alone, but also with heart would assist her,
In the place of the daughter she lost long ago, to her sorrow,
Now, when I saw thee to-day by the wagon so joyously active,
Saw the strength of thine arm and thy limb's perfection of soundness,
When to thy words I listened, so full of good sense, it all struck me,
And I hastened back home, to my parents and friends for that service
To commend the stranger. But now I am come to inform thee
Of their wishes and mine. Forgive me my faltering language."

"Shrink not," then she said, "from speaking what yet should be spoken;

No offence do you give, but with grateful feelings I've listened.
Speak it then plainly out; your words can never affright me,
You would like to engage me as maid to your father and mother,
Over your well-furnished house entrusted with full supervision;
And you believe that in me you would find a capable maiden,
Well adapted for work, and not of a rough disposition.
Briefly your offer was made, — as brief shall be, too, my answer;
Yes, I will go with you, and follow where destiny leads me,
Here my duty is done; the new-born infant's poor mother
I have restored to her own, and they all rejoice in their rescue,
Most of them here already, the rest soon hoping to join them.
All of them think, indeed, in a few short days they shall hasten
Back to their home; for so is the exile ever self-flattered.
But with hopes light as this I dare not cheat my own bosom
In these sorrowful days which still portend days of sorrow.
For the bands of the world are loosened, and what shall re-bind them,
But the most urgent need, such as that which o'er us is hanging?
If in the worthy man's house I can gain my bread as servant,
Under the eye of his wife so industrious, gladly I'll do it;
Since the wandering maiden hath still a repute that is doubtful.
Yes, I will go with you, so soon as the jugs of the strangers

I have restored, and, further, have asked from those good friends a blessing.
Come, you must see them yourself, and straight from their hands receive me."

Glad was the youth to hear the willing maiden's decision,
Doubting whether he now should not own the truth fully to her;
But it appeared to him best to leave her still to her fancy,
And to conduct her home, and there first woo her affection.
Ah! and he marked the gold ring, which the maiden wore on her finger,
And he let her still speak on, while he paid to her words deep attention.

"Let us now hasten back," she thus continued, "the maidens
Always fall into blame, who linger too long at the fountain.
Yet by the running spring to chat is still so delicious!"
Thus they arose, and looked yet once more, standing together,
Into the well; and sweet was the longing that seized on their bosoms.

Silently, then, the maid, taking hold of both jugs by the handles,
Mounted again the steps, while Hermann followed his loved one,
Wishing to take a jug, and bear his share of the burden.
"Nay, let it be," she said, "all loads are lightest when even;
And I must not be served by the master who soon will command me.
Look not so serious at me, as though my fortune were doubtful,
Woman should learn in time to serve, — 'tis her natural calling;
For through serving only attains she at length to commanding,

And to what well-earned power she wields by right in the household,
Gladly the sister serves her brother, the daughter her parents;
And so her life is still a continual coming and going,
Still a lifting and bearing, arranging and doing for others,
Well for her, if her habits be such that no path is too irksome;
That the hours of the night are to her as the hours of the daytime;
That her work never seems too fine, or her needle too tiny;
But that herself she entirely forgets, and can live but in others,
Then, as a mother, in truth she needs one and all of the virtues,
When in her sickness the babe awakes her, for nourishment craving
Weak as she is, and care to her pains is abundantly added,
Twenty men together would not endure so much trouble;
Nor are they bound; but they're bound, when they see it, to show themselves thankful."

Thus she spake, and now, with her thoughtful, silent companion,
Passing on through the gardens she came to the site of the barn-floor,
Where the poor mother lay, whom she left so glad with her daughters,
Those very girls she had saved, — the pictures of innocent beauty.
Both of them then walked in, and soon in the other direction,
Leading a child in each hand, the honored judge also entered.
These had been hitherto lost to the eyes of their sorrowing mother,
But by the worthy elder had now in the crowd been discovered;

And they eagerly sprang to kiss their dearly-loved mother,
And to rejoice in their brother, their yet unknown little playmate.
On Dorothea next they sprang, and kissed her right friendly,
Asking for bread, and fruit, and for something to drink, above all things.
Then she handed the water round, and of it the children
Drank, and so did the mother and daughters, and so did the elder,
All were pleased with their draught, and praised the excellent water,
Which a slight mineral taste for man made refreshing and wholesome.

Then with serious looks the maid replied, and addressed them,
"This is perhaps the last time, my friends, that I ever shall carry
Round to your mouths the jug, and moisten your lips with its water,
But when henceforth ye quaff a draught in the heat of the mid-day,
And in the shade enjoy your rest and the pure-gushing fountain,
Oh, then think too of me, and my friendly service amongst you,
Which from feelings of love, I rendered, even more than of kindred.
Through the rest of my life shall I own all the kindness you showed me.
Truly I grieve to leave you; though now is each to his neighbor
More a burden than comfort; and still in the land of the stranger
Must we all look to die, if return to our home be denied us,
See, here stands the youth to whom we owe thanks for the presents, —

Both for the baby's clothing here, and those viands so welcome,
Hither he comes to beg that in his house he may see me,
Acting as servant there to his rich and excellent parents:
And I have not refused; for a maiden must serve in all cases,
And to sit quiet at home and be waited on she would deem irksome.
Wherefore I follow him gladly; in sense the youth seems not deficient,
Nor will his parents be, — as befits their wealthy condition,
Wherefore now, my dear friend, farewell! and long may the baby
Live to delight your heart, who now in such health looks up to you.
But whenever to your bosom he's pressed in these bright-colored wrappers,
Oh, then think of the youth so kind, who with them supplied us,
And will henceforth to me too, your kinsman, give food and clothing,
And do you, excellent sir," (she turned to the judge while thus speaking,)
"Take my thanks for having so often been to me a father."

And upon that she kneeled down to the new-born infant's good mother,
Kissed the weeping woman, and took the blessing she whispered,
Meanwhile to Hermann said the judge most worthy of honor:
"Well may'st thou claim, my friend, to be numbered with sensible landlords,
Who with capable persons are anxious to manage their household,
For I have marked full oft, that sheep, and horses, and cattle

Are with the nicest care by touching and handling examined;
While that human aid, which, if able and good, saveth all things,
But destroys and demolishes all by its wrong interference,
That men take to their house by chance and accident only,
And, when too late, repent of an over-hasty arrangement,
But you seem to know this; for you have chosen a maiden
Who is good, in your house to serve yourself and your parents,
Keep her well, for while she an interest takes in your business
You will not miss the sister you lost, nor your parents their daughter."

Meanwhile many came in, — near relatives of the good mother, —
Bringing many a gift, and news of more suitable lodging.
All heard the maiden's resolve, and gave their blessing to Hermann,
With significant looks, and thoughts of peculiar meaning,
For the poor exiles there were whispering one to another:
"If of the master a bridegroom come, then, indeed, is he rescued."
Then did Hermann take hold of her hand, and said to her quickly
"Let us begone; the day is declining, the town is far distant."
Then, with liveliest talk, the women embraced Dorothea;
Hermann drew her away; yet with many a kiss was she greeted.
But all the children still, with screams and terrible weeping,

Clung to her clothes, and would not their second mother relinquish.
But the women thus spake, first one, then another, commanding;
"Silence, children! she's going away to the town, and will bring you
Plenty of good sugar-bread, which your little brother there ordered.
When past the baker's shop by the stork * he lately was carried.
And you will soon see her back, with her paper-bags handsomely gilded."
Thus, then, the children released her; and Hermann though not without trouble,
Tore her away from their arms, and their far-off beckoning 'kerchiefs.

HERMANN AND DOROTHEA.

Thus the two went away toward the sun now declining,
Who, storm-threatening, in clouds his form had deeply enveloped,
And from the veil, now here, now there, with fiery glances
Shot forth over the land the gleams of the ominous lightning.
"Oh! may this threatening weather," thus Hermann said, "not soon bring us
Storms of hail and furious rain! for fine is the harvest."
And they both rejoiced at the sight of the corn high and waving,
Which well-nigh reached up to the tall figures then passing through it.

Then the maiden said to the friend who was guiding her footsteps:
"Kind one, whom first I've to thank for a pleasant portion-safe shelter,

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* The reader who has not lived in Germany may require to be informed that, according to the nursery belief in that country, all babies are carried to the house and carefully dropped down the chimney by the storks, instead of being brought in the doctor's pocket, as in England.

While 'neath the open sky the storm threatens many exiles,
Tell me now, first of all, and teach me to know both your parents,
Whom to serve in future with all my soul I am anxious.
For, if one knows his master, he better can give satisfaction,
When he thinks of the things which to him seem of greatest importance,
And upon which his mind he sets with most earnest attention.
Wherefore tell me, I pray, how to win your father and mother."

Then replied thereto the good youth of clear understanding;
"Oh, how right do I deem thee, thou good and excellent maiden,
Asking first, as thou hast, concerning the views of my parents!
For in my father's service in vain till now have I striven,
While to his business, as though 'twere my own, myself I devoted,
Early and late to the field and the vineyard giving attention.
But my mother I pleased well enough, for she knew how to prize it.
Ay, and thee, too, no less will she think the most excellent maiden,
If thou take care of the house as though 'twere thine own to attend to.
But with my father not so, for he loves appearances likewise.
Do not take me, good girl, for a son that is cold and unfeeling,
If so soon I unveil my father to thee, quite a stranger.
Nay, but I swear that this is the first time such an expression

E'er hath escaped from my tongue, which is not given to prattling.
But, since thou dost from my bosom elicit each proof of reliance,
There are some graces in life for which my father is anxious, —
Outward marks of love, as well as respect, which he wishes;
And he would be, perhaps, pleased with quite an inferior servant,
Who could make use of this, and would angry be with the better."

Cheerfully then she said, as along the darkening pathway
Now with a quicker step and lighter movement she hurried,
"Surely to both at once I hope to give ample contentment;
Since thy mother's mind accords with my own disposition,
And to external graces from youth I have ne'er been a stranger.
Those French neighbors of ours, in former times, of politeness
Made no little account; to the nobleman and to the burgher,
Ay, and the peasant, 'twas common, and each to his own did commend it.
And just so amongst us, on the German side, e'en the children
Brought with kissings of hand and courtseyings every morning
Wishes of joy to their parents, and all the day long would repeat them.
All which I then did learn, to which from my youth I'm accustomed,
And which comes from my heart, to my elder master I'll practice.
But now who shall tell me to thee what should be my behavior, —
Thee, their only son, and to me in future a master?"

Thus she spake, and just then they arrived at the foot of the pear-tree.
Glorious shone the moon, at her full, down on them from heaven;
For it was night, and the sun's last gleam was totally hidden.
Thus were spread out before them in masses, the one by the other,
Lights as bright as the day, and shades of the night that are darkest.
And that friendly question was heard with pleasure by Hermann
Under the noble tree, in the spot so dear to his fancy,
And which that self-same day had witnessed his tears for the exile.
Thus while there beneath it they sat for a short time to rest them,
Seizing the maiden's hand, the enamored youth said in answer:
"Let thine own heart tell thee, and follow it freely in all things."
But no further word did he risk, though the hour so much favored;
For he feared that his haste might only bring a refusal.
Ah! and he felt, too, the ring on her finger, — that token so painful.
Thus, then, sat they still and in silence beside one another.
But the maiden began, and said, "How sweet do I find it
Watching the glorious light of the moon! The day is scarce brighter.
Yonder I clearly see in the town the houses and homesteads,
And in the gable or window methinks the panes I can number."

"What thou seest," then replied the youth, restraining his feelings,
"Is the place where we dwell, and down to which I lead thee;

And that window there in the roof belongs to my chamber,
Which will, perhaps, now be thine, for some change we shall make in the household.
These are our fields, now ripe for the harvest beginning to-morrow.
Here in the shade will we rest, and enjoy our meal in the noon-tide;
But let us now go down, proceeding through vineyard and garden;
For see yonder! the storm is coming on heavily o'er us,
Flashing lightning, and soon will extinguish the full moon so lovely."

So they arose, and pursued their way o'er the fields that lay under,
Through the magnificent corn, in the night's clear splendor rejoicing,
Till to the vineyard next they came, and entered its darkness.

And down its many slabs he thus fain to conduct her,
Which were laid there unhewn, as steps in the leaf-covered pathway.
Slowly walked she down, now resting her hands on his shoulders,
While with wavering lustre the moon through the leaves overlooked them,
Till, in storm-clouds concealed, it left the couple in darkness.
Carefully thus the strong youth the dependent maiden supported;
But not knowing the path, and unused to the rough stones along it,
Missing her step, she twisted her foot, and well-nigh had fallen.
Hastily then stretching out his arm, the youth, quick and clever,
Held his beloved one up, when she gently sank on his shoulder,

Bosom reclining on bosom, and cheek on cheek. Yet he stood there
Stiff as a marble statue, his earnest wishes restraining,
Still not pressing her closer, and still her dear weight supporting.
Thus, then, he felt that glorious burden — the warmth of her young heart,
And the balm of her breath, on his lips exhaling its fragrance,
And with the feeling of man bore woman's heroical greatness.

But she concealed her pain, and said in jocular language;
"That betokens trouble, — so say all scrupulous people, —
When, on entering a house, not far from the threshold a foot twist.
Truly, I well could have wished for myself a happier omen.
But let us wait a short time, that thou be not blamed by thy parents
For the poor limping maid, and be thought an incompetent landlord."

PROSPECT.

Muses, ye who the heart's true love so gladly have favored,
Who thus far on his way the excellent youth have conducted,
And to his bosom have pressed his maiden before the betrothal,
Help still further to perfect the tie of the love-worthy couple,
Parting at once the clouds which over their happiness gather!
But, before all, relate what within the house is now passing.

There for the third time already the impatient mother returning
Entered the men's room, which first she had left with anxiety, speaking

Of the approaching storm, and the moon's quick veiling in darkness;
Then of her son's remaining abroad, and the dangers of night-time,
While she well chided the friends, who, without a word to the maiden,
Wooing her in his behalf, from the youth so quickly had parted,
"Make not the evil worse," replied the dispirited father,
"For we ourselves, thou seest, tarry here, and abroad do not venture."

But their neighbor began to speak as he sat there so tranquil,
"Truly in hours of disquiet, like these, I always feel grateful
To my departed father, who rooted up all my impatience,
While I was yet a boy, and left not a fibre remaining;
Ay, and not one of the sages so quickly learnt to wait quiet."
"Say," replied the vicar, "what means the old man had recourse to?"
"That will I gladly tell you, since each for himself may well mark it."
Answered then the neighbor. "I stood one Sunday impatient,
When I was yet a boy, for the carriage eagerly waiting
Which was to take us out to the well 'neath the shade of the lime-trees.
Still it came not, and I, like a weasel, ran backward and forward,
Stepping up and down, and from window to door, without ceasing.
Oh, how my hands did tingle! and how I was scratching the table,
Tramping and stamping about, and ready to burst into crying!
All was seen by the tranquil man; but at length, when I acted

Quite too foolish a part, by the arm he quietly took me,
Leading me up to the window, with words of dubious purport,
'Seest thou, closed for the day, the carpenter's workshop o'er yonder ?
It will be opened to-morrow, and plane and saw will be busy ;
And so will pass the industrious hours from morning till evening,
But bethink thee of this : the morrow will one day be coming,
When the master will stir him with all his workmen about him,
Making a coffin for thee to be quickly and deftly completed ;
And over here all so busy that house of planks they will carry,
Which must at last receive the impatient alike and the patient,
And a close-pressing roof very soon to bear is appointed.
All straightway in my mind I saw thus really happen,
Saw the planks joined together, the sable colors preparing,
And once more sitting patient in quiet awaited the carriage.
Thus, whenever I now see others in doubtful expectance,
Awkwardly running about, I needs must think of the coffin."

Smiling, the vicar replied : "The picture of death ever busy,
Strikes not the wise with fear, nor is viewed as an end by the pious ;
Back into life it urges the one, for its dealings instructed,
And for the other in sorrow it strengthens the hope of the future.
Death becomes life to both. And so it was wrong in your father

Death to present as death to the eye of sensitive boyhood.
Nay, rather show youth the worth of old age ripe in honors,
And to the old man show youth; that so the ne'er-ending circle
Both may enjoy, and life in life may be fully accomplished."

But now the door was thrown open, and showed the magnificent couple;
And astonishment seized the friends and affectionate parents
At the form of the bride, nearly equalling that of the bridegroom.
Yea, the door seemed too small to allow the tall figures to enter,
Which, as they came on together, were now seen crossing the threshold.
Hermann with hurried words presented her then to his parents;
"Here," he said, "is a maiden brought into your house, my dear father,
Just as you wished; give her welcome, for that she deserves. And, dear mother,
She hath already inquired the whole extent of our business;
So that you see how well henceforth she deserves to be near you."
Hastily then aside he drew the excellent vicar,
Saying, "Most worthy sir, now help me in this my dilemma
Quickly, and loosen the knots whose entanglement makes me quite shudder,
For I have not yet dared as my bride to sue for the maiden,
But as a servant she weens she is come to the house; and I tremble
Lest she refuse to stay, as soon as we think about marriage.
But let it be quickly decided; no longer in error

Shall she remain; nor can I any longer endure to be doubtful.
Haste, then, and show in this case the wisdom for which we revere thee."
Then the pastor at once went away, and returned to the party.
But already the soul of the maiden was grievously troubled
Through the father's address, who at once, with kindly intention,
Words of sprightly purport in joking manner had spoken:
"Ay, this is pleasant, my child! I am glad to see that my son is
Blessed with good taste, like his sire, who (as those of his day knew) did always
Lead the finest girl to the dance, and at length brought the finest
Into his house as his wife,—and that was my Hermann's dear mother.
For by the bride a man chooses it needs not long to discover
What a spirit he's of, and whether he feels his own value.
But you required, I suppose, but a short time to form your conclusion,
For, sure, it seems to me that he's not such a hard one to follow."

Hermann but slightly caught these words, but his limbs to the marrow
Quivered, and all at once the whole circle was hushed into silence.

But the excellent maiden by words of such cruel mocking,
(As they appeared), being hurt and deeply wounded in spirit,
Stood there, her cheeks to her neck suffused with quick-spreading blushes,
Yet her feelings she checked, and her self-possession regaining

Though not entirely concealing her pain, thus spake to the old man:
"Truly, for such a reception your son quite failed to prepare me,
Painting to me the ways of his father, that excellent burgher.
And I am standing, I know, before you, the man of refinement,
Who with judgment behaves to each one, as suits their positions,
But for the poor girl, methinks, you have not sufficient compassion,
Who has now crossed your threshold, and comes prepared for your service;
Else with such bitter mocking you surely would not have shown me,
How far my lot from your son, and from yourself is now severed.
Poor, indeed, and with this small bundle I come to your dwelling,
Which is furnished with all that marks a prosperous owner;
But I well know myself, and thoroughly feel my position.
Is it noble to make me at once the butt of such mocking
As, on the very threshold, well-nigh from your house drove me backward?"

Much was Hermann alarmed, and made signs to his good friend the pastor,
That he should interfere, and at once put an end to the error.
Quickly the prudent man stepped up, and saw in the maiden
Silent chagrin, and pain subdued, and tears on her eyelids.
Then his soul urged him on, not at once to end the confusion,
But still further to test the afflicted heart of the maiden:
And upon that he addressed her with words of searching intention:

"Surely, thou foreign maiden, thou didst not wisely consider,
When with all haste thou resolvedst to be a servant to strangers,
What is it to live with a master, subject to orders;
For, but once strike the hand, and thy whole year's doom is decided,
And the 'yes' but once spoken to much endurance will bind thee.
Truly, wearisome days are not the worst part of service,
Nor the bitter sweat of work everlastingly pressing;
Since the freeman, if active, will labor as hard as the bond-slave.
But to endure the whims of the master who blames without reason,
Wanting now this, now that, with himself still ever at discord;
Ay, and the pettish mood of the mistress who soon waxes angry,
Joined to the children's rough and insolent want of good manners;
This is hard to bear, and still be performing your duty
Undelaying and prompt, and without any sullen objections.
Truly, thou seem'st not well-suited for this, since the jokes of the father
Wound thee so deeply at once; and yet there is nothing more common
Than to tease a girl about finding a youth to her fancy."

Thus he spake: but his cutting words were felt by the maiden,
And she no longer refrained, but her feelings displayed themselves strongly,
Causing her bosom to heave, while groanings burst their way from it.
And with hot gushing tears she at once addressed him in answer:
"Oh! the wise man ne'er knows, when he thinks in pain to advise us,
How little power his cold words can have to release our poor bosoms

From the woes which the hand of imperious doom lays upon them.
Happy are ye, and glad; and how should a joke then e'er wound you?
But by the man who is sick e'en the gentle touch is felt painful.
No, 'twould avail me nothing, e'en though my disguise had succeeded.
Let, then, at once be seen, what later had deepened my sorrow,
And had brought me, perhaps, to misery silently-wasting,
Let me again begone! In the house no more may I tarry.
I will away, and go to seek my poor people in exile,
Whom I forsook in their trouble, to choose for my own profit only.
This is my firm resolve; and now I may dare to acknowledge
That which else in my heart full many a year had lain hidden.
Yes, the father's mocking hath deeply wounded me; not that
I am peevish and proud (which would ill become a poor servant),
But that, in truth, I felt in my heart a strong inclination
Tow'rds the youth who to-day had appeared as my saviour from evil.
For when first on the road he had gone and left me, his image
Lingered still in my mind, and I thought of the fortunate maiden,
Whom, perhaps, as his bride in his heart he already might cherish.
And when I found him again at the well, the sight of him pleased me
Not at all less than if I had seen an angel from heaven;
And my consent was so glad, when he asked me to come as a servant!
Yet my heart, it is true, on the way (I will freely confess it)

Flattered me with the thought that I might perhaps earn his affection,
If I should some day prove a stay the house could not dispense with.
Oh! but now for the first time I see the risk I encountered,
When I would dwell so near to an object of silent devotion.
Now for the first time I feel how far a poor maiden is severed
From the youth who is rich, although she were never so prudent,
All this now have I told, that you may not my heart misinterpret.
Hurt as it was by a chance which has brought me back to my senses.
For, while my silent wishes were hid, I must needs have expected
That I should next see him bring his bride to her home here conducted,
And how then had I borne my unseen burden of sorrow?
Happily have I been warned, and happily now from my bosom
Has the secret escaped, while yet there were cures for the evil.
But I have spoken enough. And now no more shall aught keep me
Here in the house where I stand in shame alone and in anguish,
Freely confessing my love and the hope which sprang from my folly, —
Not the night, far and wide in brooding clouds now enveloped,
Nor the roaring thunder (I hear it) shall keep me from going;
No, nor the gush of the rain, which abroad drives down with such fury,
Nor the whistling storm. All this ere now have I suffered
In our sorrowful flight, with the enemy closely pursuing;

And I will now go forth again, as I've long been
accustomed,
Caught by the whirlwind of time, to part from all I
could cherish.
Fare ye well! I can stay no longer, but all is now
over."

Thus she spoke, and again to the door was quickly
returning,
Still keeping under her arm the little bundle brought
with her.
But with both her arms the mother laid hold of the
maiden,
Clinging round her waist, and cried in wondering
amazement.
"Say, what meanest thou by this, and these tears now
shed to no purpose?
No, I will not permit thee, — thou art my son's own
betrothed one."
But the father stood there displeased with what was
before him,
Eying the weeping women, and spoke with the words
of vexation:
"This, then, befalls me at last, as the greatest test of
forbearance,
That at the close of the day what is most unpleasant
should happen!
For I find nothing so hard to bear as the weeping of
women,
And the passionate scream, that with eager confusion
commences,
Scenes which a little good sense might soften down
with more comfort.
Irksome is it to me still to look on this wondrous beginning;
Ye must conclude it yourselves, for I to my bed am
now going."

And he quickly turned round, and hastened to go to
the chamber,
Where his marriage bed stood, and where he was
still wont to rest him.

But his son held him back, and said with words of entreaty:
"Father, make not such haste, nor be angry because of the maiden.
I alone have to bear the blame for all this confusion,
Which our friend, by dissembling, made unexpectedly greater.
Speak, then, worthy sir, for to you is the matter confided.
Heap not up trouble and grief, but rather bring all to good issue;
For, in truth, I might never in future so highly respect you,
If but pleasure in mischief you practised for glorious wisdom."

Speaking then with a smile, the worthy vicar made answer:
"Say, what cleverness, then, could have won so fair a confession
From the good maiden here, and her heart before us uncovered?
Has not thy sorrow at once been turned into bliss and rejoicing?
Wherefore but speak for yourself: what need of a stranger's explaining?"
Hermann now coming forward with joyful words thus addressed her:
"Do not repent of thy tears, nor of pains so fleeting as these are,
For they but bring my joy, and thine, too, I hope, to perfection.
Not to hire as a servant the stranger, the excellent maiden,
Came I up to the well; — I came thy dear love to sue for.
O but out on my bashful glance! which thy heart's inclination
Was not able to see, but saw in thine eye naught but friendship,
When in the calm well's mirror thou gavest me there such kind greeting.

Merely to bring thee home the half of my happiness gave me.
And thou art now completing it quite; my blessing be on thee!"
Then did the maiden look at the youth with deepest emotion,
And refused not the embrace and kiss, — the crown of rejoicing,
When they at length afford to lovers the long-wished assurance
Of their life's future joy, which now seems of endless duration.

All meanwhile to the rest had been explained by the vicar,
But the maiden came with vows of hearty affection
Gracefully made to the father; and kissing his hand, though retracted,
Said: "It is surely but right that you pardon a poor surprised maiden,
First for her tears of pain, and now for her tears of rejoicing.
Oh! forgive me that feeling, forgive me this present one also;
And let me comprehend my happiness newly imparted.
Yes, let the first annoyance which in my confusion I caused you
Be now at once the last! That service of faithful affection
Which was your maid's bounden duty, your daughter shall equally render."

Hiding then his tears, the father quickly embraced her;
And the mother came up with kisses familiar and hearty,
Shaking her hand in her own, while the weeping women were silent.
Speedily then laid hold the good and intelligent vicar.
First, of the father's hand, and drew the wedding-ring off it

(Not so easily, though; for the plump round finger detained it),
Then the mother's ring he took, and affianced the children;
Saying: "Once more let the rings of gold discharge their glad office,
Closely securing a tie which exactly resembles the old one.
Deeply this youth is pierced through and through with love of the maiden,
And the maiden hath owned that the youth, too, hath called forth her wishes.
Wherefore I here betroth you, and bless you forever hereafter,
With your parents' consent, and with this true friend to bear witness."

And the neighbor at once bowed his head, with wishes for blessings.
But when the reverend man the golden ring was now placing
On the maiden's finger, he saw with amazement the other,
Which before, at the well, had been viewed with sorrow by Hermann:
And he said thereupon with words of friendly jocoseness:
"What! for the second time art thou now betrothed? May the first youth
Not appear at the altar, with words forbidding the marriage!"

But she said in reply: "Oh, let me to this dear memento
Consecrate one short moment; for well did the good man deserve it,
Who, when departing, gave it, and never came back for the nuptials.
All was foreseen by him at the time when his longing for freedom,
And his desire to act in the scenes of a novel existence,

Urged him quickly to Paris, where dungeon and
death he encountered.
'Live, and be happy,' said he, 'I go; for all that is
earthly
Now is changing at once, and all seems doomed to
be severed.
In the most settled states the primary laws are departing;
Property is departing from even the oldest possessor;
Friend is departing from friend, and love from love,
in like manner.
I now leave thee here; and where I may e'er again
find thee,
Who can tell? Perhaps this may be our last conversation.
Man, it is rightly said, on earth is only a stranger;
More a stranger than ever has each one in these days
been rendered.
Even our soil is ours no longer; our treasures are
wandering;
Gold and silver are melted from forms which time
had made sacred.
All is moving, as though the world, long formed,
would dissolve back
Into chaos and night, and be formed anew for the
future.
Thou wilt for me keep thy heart; and if we meet
again hereafter,
Over the wreck of the world, we both shall then be
new creatures,
Quite transformed and free, and no longer dependent
on fortune;
For what fetters could bind the man who survived
such an epoch?
But if it is not to be, that happily freed from these
dangers
We should one day again with joy return to each
other;
Oh, then, keep in thy thoughts my image still hovering
before thee;

That thou with equal courage for joy and grief mayest be ready,
Should a new home appear, and new connections invite thee;
Then enjoy thou with thanks whate'er by thy fate is provided:
Love them well that love thee, and for kindness show thyself grateful;
Yet, e'en then set thy foot but lightly, where all is so changeful;
For the redoubled pain of new loss still near thee is lurking.
Holy be that thy day! Yet esteem not life of more value
Than aught else that is good: and all that is good is deceitful.'
Thus he spake, and before me the noble one ne'er reappearèd.
All meantime have I lost, and a thousand times thought of his warning;
And now I think of his words, when so splendidly love is preparing
Joy for me here, and disclosing most glorious hopes for the future.
Oh! forgive me, my excellent friend, if I tremble while leaning
E'en on thine arm! So deems the sailor, at length safely landed,
That the firmly set base of the solid ground is still rocking."

  Thus she spoke, and placed the rings, one close to the other.
But the bridegroom said, with noble and manly emotion:
"All the firmer be, in this shaking of all things around us,
Dorothea, this tie! Yes, we will continue still holding,
Firmly holding ourselves and the good things we have in possession.
For in wavering times the man whose views also waver

Does but increase the evil and spread it further and further;
While he who firmly stands to his views moves the world to his wishes.
Ill becomes it the German the fear-inspiring commotion
Still to prolong, and still to be staggering hither and thither.
'This is ours!' so let us assert, and maintain our assertion!
Men of resolute minds are still ever valued the highest,
Who for God and the law, for parents, for wives and for children
Battled, against the foe together standing till vanquished.
Thou art mine, and now what is mine is more mine than ever.
Not with vexation of heart will I keep, and with sorrow enjoy it,
But with courage and might. And should our foes threaten at present,
Or in future, equip me thyself, and hand me my weapons
Knowing that thou wilt attend to my house, and affectionate parents,
Oh! I shall then 'gainst the foe stand with breast of fearless assurance,
And if but each man thought as I think, then quickly would stand up
Might against might, and of peace we all should share the enjoyment."

WEST-EASTERN DIVAN.

Who the song would understand,
Needs must seek the song's own land.
Who the minstrel understand,
Needs must seek the minstrel's land.

The poems comprised in this collection are written in the Persian style, and are greatly admired by Oriental scholars, for the truthfulness with which the Eastern spirit of poetry is reproduced by the Western minstrel. They were chiefly composed between the years 1814 and 1819, and first given to the world in the latter year. Of the twelve books into which they are divided, that of Suleika will probably be considered the best, from the many graceful love-songs which it contains. The following is Heine's account of the *Divan*, and may well serve as a substitute for anything I could say respecting it: —

"It contains opinions and sentiments on the East, expressed in a series of rich cantos and stanzas full of sweetness and spirit, and all this as enchanting as a harem emitting the most delicious and rare perfumes, and blooming with exquisitely-lovely nymphs with eyebrows painted black, eyes piercing as those of the antelope, arms white as alabaster, and of the most graceful and perfectly-formed shapes, while the heart of the reader beats and grows faint, as did that of the happy Gaspard Debaran, the clown, who, when on the highest step of his ladder, was enabled to peep into the Seraglio of Constantinople — that recess concealed from the inspection of man. Sometimes also the reader may imagine himself indolently stretched on a carpet of Persian softness, luxuriously smoking the yellow tobacco of Turkistan through a long tube of jessamine and amber, while a black slave fans him with a fan of peacock's feathers, and a little boy presents him with a cup of genuine Mocha. Goethe has put these enchanting and voluptuous customs into poetry, and his verses are so perfect, so harmonious, so tasteful, so soft, that it seems really surprising that he should ever have been able to have brought the German language to this state of suppleness. The charm of the book is inexplicable; it is a votive nosegay sent from the West to the East, composed of the most precious and curious plants: red roses, hortensias like the breast of a spotless maiden, purple digitales like the long finger of a man, fantastically formed ranunculi, and in the midst of all, silent and tastefully concealed, a tuft of German violets. This nosegay signifies that the West is tired of thin and icy-cold spirituality, and seeks warmth in the strong and healthy bosom of the East."

Translations are here given of upwards of sixty of the best poems embraced in the *Divan*, the number in the original exceeding two hundred.

I. MORGANNI NAMEH.

BOOK OF THE MINSTREL.

TALISMANS.

God is of the east possessed,
God is ruler of the west;
North and south alike, each land
Rests within His gentle hand.

He, the only righteous one,
Wills that right to each be done.
'Mongst His hundred titles, then,
Highest praised be this! — Amen.

Error seeketh to deceive me,
Thou art able to retrieve me;
Both in action and in song
Keep my course from going wrong.

◆

THE FOUR FAVORS.

That Arabs through the realms of space
May wander on, light-hearted,
Great Allah hath, to all their race,
Four favors meet imparted.

The turban first — that ornament
All regal crowns excelling;
A light and ever-shifting tent,
Wherein to make our dwelling;

A sword, which, more than rocks and walls
Doth shield us, brightly glistening;
A song that profits and enthrals,
For which the maids are listening.

DISCORD.

When by the brook his strain
  Cupid is fluting,
And on the neighboring plain
  Mavors disputing,
There turns the ear ere long,
  Loving and tender,
Yet to the noise the song
  Soon must surrender.
Loud then the flute-notes glad
  Sound 'mid war's thunder;
If I grow raving mad,
  Is it a wonder?
Flutes sing and trumpets bray,
  Waxing yet stronger;
If, then, my senses stray,
  Wonder no longer.

◆

SONG AND STRUCTURE.

Let the Greek his plastic clay
  Mould in human fashion,
While his own creation may
  Wake his glowing passion;

But it is our joy to court
  Great Euphrates' torrent,
Here and there at will to sport
  In the watery current.

Quenched I thus my spirit's flame,
  Songs had soon resounded;
Water drawn by bards whose fame
  Pure is, may be rounded.*

---

* This oriental belief in the power of the pure to roll-up water into a crystal ball is made the foundation of the interesting *Pariah Legend* that will be found elsewhere amongst the *Ballads*.

II. HAFIS NAMEH.

BOOK OF HAFIS.

Spirit let us bridegroom call,
And the Word the bride ;
Known this wedding is to all
Who have Hafis tried.

THE UNLIMITED.

That thou canst never end, doth make thee great,
And that thou ne'er beginnest, is thy fate.
Thy song is changeful as yon starry frame,
End and beginning evermore the same;
And what the middle bringeth, but contains
What was at first, and what at last remains.
Thou art of joy the true and minstrel-source,
From thee pours wave on wave with ceaseless force.
A mouth that's aye prepared to kiss,
A breast whence flows a loving song,
A throat that finds no draught amiss,
An open heart that knows no wrong.

And what though all the world should sink!
Hafis, with thee, alone with thee
Will I contend! joy, misery,
The portion of us twain shall be;
Like thee to love, like thee to drink, —
This be my pride, — this, life to me!

Now, Song, with thine own fire be sung, —
For thou art older, thou more young!

◆

TO HAFIS.

Hafis, straight to equal thee,
One would strive in vain ;
Though a ship with majesty
Cleaves the foaming main,
Feels its sails swell haughtily
As it onward hies;
Crushed by ocean's stern decree,
Wrecked it straightway lies.

Tow'rd thee, songs, light, graceful, free,
  Mount with cooling gush;
Then their glow consumeth me,
  As like fire they rush.
Yet a thought with ecstasy
  Hath my courage moved;
In the land of melody
  I have lived and loved.

◆

III. USCHK NAMEH.

BOOK OF LOVE.

THE TYPES.

List, and in memory bear
These six fond loving pair,
Love, when aroused, kept true
Rustan and Rodawu!
Strangers approach from far
Jussuf and Suleika;
Love, void of hope, is in
Ferhad and Schirin.
Born for each other are
Medschun and Leila;
Loving, though old and gray,
Dschemil saw Boteinah.
Love's sweet caprice anon,
Brown maid* and Solomon!
If thou dost mark them well,
Stronger thy love will swell.

◆

ONE PAIR MORE.

Love is, indeed, a glorious prize!
What fairer guerdon meets our eyes?—
Though neither wealth nor power are thine,
A very hero thou dost shine.
As of the prophet they will tell,
Wamik and Asra's tale as well.—
They'll tell not of them,—they'll but give
Their names, which now are all that live.

---

* The Queen of Sheba.

The deeds they did, the toils they proved
No mortal knows! But that they loved
This know we. Here's the story true
Of Wamik and of Asra, too.

◆

Love's torments sought a place of rest,
Where all might drear and lonely be;
They found ere long my desert breast,
And nestled in its vacancy.

◆

IV. TEFKIR NAMEH.

BOOK OF CONTEMPLATION.

FIVE THINGS.

What makes time short to me?
Activity!
What makes it long and spiritless?
'Tis idleness!
What brings us to debt?
To delay and forget!
What makes us succeed?
Decision with speed!
How to fame to ascend?
Oneself to defend!

For woman due allowance make!
Formed of a crooked rib was she.—
By Heaven she could not straightened be.
Attempt to bend her, and she'll break;
If left alone, more crooked grows madam;
What well could be worse, my good friend Adam?—
For woman due allowance make;
'Twere grievous, if thy rib should break!

FIRDUSI (*speaks*).

O world, with what baseness and guilt thou art rife!
Thou nurturest, trainest, and killest the while.
He only whom Allah doth bless with his smile
Is trained and is nurtured with riches and life.

SULEIKA (*speaks*).

The mirror tells me I am fair!
Thou sayest, to grow old my fate will be.
Naught in God's presence changeth e'er, —
Love Him, for this one moment, then, in me.

◆

V. RENDSCH NAMEH.

BOOK OF GLOOM.

It is a fault oneself to praise,
And yet 'tis done by each whose deeds are kind;
And if there's no deceit in what he says,
The good we still as good shall find.

Let, then, ye fools, that wise man taste
Of joy, who fancies that he's wise;
That he, a fool like you may waste
The insipid thanks the world supplies.

◆

VI. HIKMET NAMEH.

BOOK OF PROVERBS.

Call on the present day and night for naught,
Save what by yesterday was brought.

The sea is flowing ever,
The land retains it never.

Be stirring, man, while yet the day is clear;
The night when none can work fast draweth near. *

When the heavy-laden sigh,
Deeming help and hope gone by,
Oft with healing power is heard,
Comfort-fraught, a kindly word.

How vast is mine inheritance, how glorious and sublime!
For time mine own possession is, the land I till is time!

---

* This fine couplet is given as the motto to an early edition of *Wilhelm Meister.*

Enweri saith, — ne'er lived a man more true;
The deepest heart, the highest head, he knew, —
"In every place and time thou'lt find availing
Uprightness, judgment, kindliness unfailing."

* * *

Though the bards whom the Orient sun hath blessed
Are greater than we who dwell in the west,
Yet in hatred of those whom our equals we find,
In *this* we're not in the least behind.

* * *

Would we let our envy burst,
Feed its hunger fully first!
To keep our proper place,
We'll show our bristles more;
With hawks men all things chase
Except the savage boar.

* * *

By those who themselves more bravely have fought
A hero's praise will be joyfully told.
The worth of man can only be taught
By those who have suffered both heat and cold.

* * *

"Wherefore is truth so far from our eyes,
Buried as though in a distant land'?'
None at the proper moment are wise!
Could they properly understand,
Truth would appear in her own sweet guise,
Beauteous, gentle, and close at hand.

* * *

Why these inquiries make,
Where charity may flow?
Cast in the flood thy cake, —
Its eater, who will know?

* * *

Once when I a spider had killed,
Then methought: was't right or wrong?
That we both to these times should belong,
This had God in His goodness willed.

Motley this congregation is, for, lo!
At the communion kneel both friend and foe.

* * *

If the country I'm to show,
Thou must on the housetop go.

* * *

A man with households twain
Ne'er finds attention meet;
A house wherein two women reign
Is ne'er kept clean and neat.

* * *

Bless, thou dread Creator,
Bless this humble fane;
Man may build them *greater*, —
More they'll not contain.

* * *

Let this house's glory rise,
Handed to far ages down,
And the son his honor prize,
As the father his renown.

* * *

O'er the Mediterranean sea
Proudly hath the Orient sprung;
Who loves Hafis and knows him, he
Knows what Calderon hath sung.

* * *

If the ass that bore the Saviour
Were to Mecca driven, he
Would not alter, but would be
Still an ass in his behavior.

* * *

The flood of passion storms with fruitless strife
'Gainst the unvanquished solid land —
It throws poetic pearls upon the strand,
And thus is gained the prize of life.

* * *

When so many minstrels there are,
How it pains me, alas, to know it!
Who from the earth drives poetry far?
Who but the poet!

VII. TIMUR NAMEH.

BOOK OF TIMUR.

THE WINTER AND TIMUR.

So the winter now closed round them
With resistless fury. Scattering
Over all his breath so icy,
He inflamed each wind that bloweth
To assail them angrily.
Over them he gave dominion
To his frost-ensharpened tempests;
Down to Timur's council went he,
And with threatening voice addressed him —
"Softly, slowly, wretched being!
Live, the tyrant of injustice;
But shall hearts be scorched much longer
By thy flames, — consume before them?
If amongst the evil spirits
Thou art one, — good! I'm another.
Thou a graybeard art — so *I* am;
Land and men we make to stiffen.
Thou art Mars! And I Saturnus, —
Both are evil-working planets,
When united, horror-fraught.
Thou dost kill the soul, thou freezest
E'en the atmosphere; still colder
Is my breath than thine was ever.
Thy wild armies vex the faithful
With a thousand varying torments!
Well! God grant that I discover
Even worse, before I perish!
And, by God, I'll give thee none.
Let God hear what now I tell thee!
Yes, by God! from Death's cold clutches
Naught, O graybeard, shall protect thee,
Not the hearth's broad coal-fire's ardor,
Not December's brightest flame."

TO SULEIKA.

Fitting perfumes to prepare,
And to raise thy rapture high,
Must a thousand rosebuds fair,
First in fiery torments die.

One small flask's contents to glean,
Whose sweet fragrance aye may live,
Slender as thy finger e'en,
Must a world its treasures give;

Yes, a world where life is moving
Which, with impulse full and strong,
Could forebode the Bulbul's loving,
Sweet, and spirit-stirring song.

Since they thus have swelled our joy,
Should such torments grieve us, then?
Does not Timur's rule destroy
Myriad souls of living men?

VIII. SULEIKA NAMEH.

BOOK OF SULEIKA.

Once, methought, in the night hours cold,
That I saw the moon in my sleep;
But as soon as I wakened, behold
Unawares rose the sun from the deep.

That Suleika's love was so strong
For Jussuf, need cause no surprise;
He was young, youth pleaseth the eyes, —
He was fair, they say, beyond measure,
Fair was she, and so great was their pleasure.
But that thou, who awaitedst me long,
Youthful glances of fire dost throw me,
Soon will bless me, thy love now dost show me,
This shall my joyous numbers proclaim,
Thee I forever Suleika shall name.

HATEM.

Not occasion *makes* the thief;
She's the greatest of the whole;
For Love's relics, to my grief,
From my aching heart she stole.

She hath given it to thee, —
All the joy my life had known,
So that, in my poverty,
Life I seek from thee alone.

Yet compassion greets me straight
In the lustre of thine eye,
And I bless my new-born fate,
As within thine arms I lie.

◆

SULEIKA.

The sun appears! A glorious sight!
The crescent-moon clings round him now.
What could this wondrous pair unite?
How to explain this riddle? How?

HATEM.

May this our joy's foreboder prove!
In it I view myself and thee;
Thou callest me thy sun, my love, —
Come, my sweet moon, cling thou round me!

◆

Love for love, and moments sweet,
Lips returning kiss for kiss,
Word for word, and eyes that meet;
Breath for breath, and bliss for bliss.
Thus at eve, and thus the morrow!
Yet thou feelest, at my lay,
Ever some half-hidden sorrow;
Could I Jussuf's graces borrow,
All thy beauty I'd repay!

HATEM.

O SAY, 'neath what celestial sign
The day doth lie,
When ne'er again this heart of mine
Away will fly?
And e'en though fled (what thought divine!)
Would near me lie?—
On the soft couch, on whose sweet shrine
My heart near hers will lie!

◆

HATEM.

HOLD me, locks, securely caught
In the circle of her face!
Dear brown serpents, I have naught
To repay this act of grace.

Save a heart whose love ne'er dies,
Throbbing with aye-youthful glow;
For a raging Etna lies
Neath its veil of mist and snow.

Yonder mountain's stately brow
Thou, like morning beams, dost shame;
Once again feels Hatem now
Spring's soft breath and summer's flame.

One more bumper! Fill the glass;
This last cup I pledge to thee!—
By mine ashes if she pass,
"He consumed," she'll say, "for me."

◆

THE LOVING ONE SPEAKS.

AND wherefore sends not
The horseman captain
His heralds hither
Each day, unfailing?
Yet hath he horses,
He writeth well.

He writeth Talik,
And Neski knows he
To write with beauty
On silken tablets.
I'd deem him present,
Had I his words.

The sick one *will* not,
Will not recover
From her sweet sorrow;
She when she heareth
That her true lover
Grows well, falls sick.

◆

THE LOVING ONE AGAIN.

Writes he in Neski,
Faithfully speaks he;
Writes he in Talik.
Joy to give seeks he;
Writes he in either,
Good! — for he loves!

◆

These tufted branches fair
  Observe, my loved one, well!
And see the fruits they bear
  In green and prickly shell.

They've hung rolled up, till now,
  Unconsciously and still;
A loosely-waving bough
  Doth rock them at its will.

Yet, ripening from within,
  The kernel brown swells fast;
It seeks the air to win,
  It seeks the sun at last.

With joy it bursts its thrall,
  The shell must needs give way;
'Tis thus my numbers fall
  Before thy feet, each day.

SULEIKA.

What is by this stir revealed?
Doth the East glad tidings bring?
For my heart's deep wounds are healed
By his mild and cooling wing.

He the dust with sports doth meet,
And in gentle cloudlets chase;
To the vine-leaf's safe retreat
Drives the insects' happy race,

Cools these burning cheeks of mine,
Check the sun's fierce glow amain,
Kisses, as he flies, the vine,
Flaunting over hill and plain.

And his whispers soft convey
Thousand greetings from my friend;
Ere these hills own night's dark sway,
Kisses greet me without end.

Thus canst thou still onward go,
Serving friend and mourner, too!
There, where lofty ramparts glow,
Soon the loved one shall I view.

Ah, what makes the heart's truth know,—
Love's sweet breath,—a new-born life,—
Learn I from *his* mouth alone,
In *his* breath alone is rife!

◆

THE SUBLIME TYPE.

The sun, whom Grecians Helios call,
His heavenly path with pride doth tread,
And, to subdue the world's wild all,
Looks round, beneath him, high o'erhead.

He sees the fairest goddess pine,
Heaven's child, the daughter of the clouds,—
For her alone he seems to shine;
In trembling grief his form he shrouds.

Careless for all the realms of bliss, —
  Her streaming tears more swiftly flow:
For every pearl he gives a kiss,
  And changeth into joy her woe.

She gazeth upward fixedly,
  And deeply feels his glance of might,
While, stamped with his own effigy,
  Each pearl would range itself aright.

Thus wreathed with bows, with hues thus graced,
  With gladness beams her face so fair
While he, to meet her, maketh haste,
  And yet, alas! can reach her ne'er.

So, by the harsh decree of Fate,
  Thou movest from me, dearest one;
And were I Helios e'en, the Great,
  What would avail his chariot throne?

◆

SULEIKA.

Zephyr, for thy humid wing,
  Oh, how much I envy thee!
Thou to *him* canst tidings bring,
  How our parting saddens me!

In my breast, a yearning still
  As thy pinions wave, appears:
Flowers and eyes, and wood, and hill
  At thy breath are steeped in tears.

Yet thy mild wing gives relief,
  Soothes the aching eyelid's pain;
Ah, I else had died for grief,
  Him ne'er hoped to see again.

To my love, then, quick repair,
  Whisper softly to his heart;
Yet, to give him pain, beware,
  Nor my bosom's pangs impart.

Tell him, but in accents coy,
  That his love must be my life;
Both, with feelings fraught with joy,
  In his presence will be rife.

THE REUNION.

Can it be! of stars the star,
  Do I press thee to my heart?
In the night of distance far,
  What deep gulf, what bitter smart!
Yes, 'tis thou, indeed at last,
  Of my joys the partner dear!
Mindful, though, of sorrows past,
  I the present needs must fear.

When the still unfashioned earth
  Lay on God's eternal breast,
He ordained its hour of birth,
  With creative joy possessed.
Then a heavy sigh arose,
  When He spake the sentence: — "Be!"
And the All, with mighty throes,
  Burst into reality.

And when thus was born the light,
  Darkness near it feared to stay,
And the elements with might
  Fled on every side away;
Each on some far-distant trace,
  Each with visions wild employed,
Numb, in boundless realms of space,
  Harmony and feeling-void.

Dumb was all, all still and dead,
  For the first time, God alone!
Then He formed the morning-red,
  Which soon made its kindness known:
It unravelled from the waste,
  Bright and glowing harmony,
And once more with love was graced
  What contended formerly.

And with earnest, noble strife,
  Each its own peculiar sought;
Back to full, unbounded life,
  Sight and feeling soon were brought.

Wherefore, if 'tis done, explore
  How? why give the manner, name?
Allah need create no more,
  We his world ourselves can frame.

So, with morning pinions bright,
  To thy mouth was I impelled;
Stamped with thousand seals by night,
  Star-clear is the bond fast held.
Paragons on earth are we
  Both of grief and joy sublime,
And a second sentence: — "Be!"
  Parts us not a second time.

◆

SULEIKA.

With what inward joy, sweet lay,
  I thy meaning have descried!
Lovingly thou seemest to say
  That I'm ever by his side;

That he ever thinks of me,
  That he to the absent gives
All his love's sweet ecstasy,
  While for him alone she lives.

Yes, the mirror which reveals
  Thee, my loved one, is my breast;
This the bosom, where thy seals
  Endless kisses have impressed.

Numbers sweet, unsullied truth,
  Chain me down in sympathy!
Love's embodied radiant youth,
  In the garb of Poesy!

In thousand forms mayst thou attempt surprise,
  Yet, all-belovèd one, straight know I thee;
Thou mayst with magic veils thy face disguise,
  And yet, all-present one, straight know I thee.

Upon the cypress' purest, youthful bud,
  All-beauteous-growing one, straight know I thee;
In the canal's unsullied, living flood,
  All-captivating one, well know I thee.

When spreads the water-column, rising proud,
All-sportive one, how gladly know I thee;
When, e'en in forming, is transformed the cloud,
All-figure-changing one, there know I thee.

Veiled in the meadow-carpet's flowery charms,
All-chequered starry fair one, know I thee;
And if a plant extend its thousand arms,
O, all-embracing one, there know I thee.

When on the mount is kindled morn's sweet light,
Straightway, all-gladdening one, salute I thee,
The arch of heaven o'er head grows pure and bright,—
All-heart-expanding one, then breathe I thee.

That which my inward, outward sense proclaims,
Thou all-instructing one, I know through thee;
And if I utter Allah's hundred names,
A name with each one echoes, meant for thee.

IX. SAKI NAMEH.

THE CONVIVIAL BOOK.

Can the Koran from eternity be?
'Tis worth not a thought!
Can the Koran a creation, then, be?
Of that, I know naught!
Yet that the book of all books it must be,
I believe as a Mussulman ought.
That from eternity wine, though, must be,
I ever have thought;
That 'twas ordained, ere the angels, to be,
As a truth may be taught.
Drinkers, however these matters may be,
Gaze on God's face, fearing naught.

Ye've often, for our drunkenness,
Blamed us in every way,
And, in abuse of drunkenness,
Enough can never say.

Men, overcome by drunkenness,
  Are wont to lie till day;
And yet I find *my* drunkenness
  All night-time make me stray;
For, oh! 'tis Love's sweet drunkenness
  That maketh me its prey,
Which, night and day, and day and night,
  My heart must needs obey, —
A heart that in its drunkenness,
  Pours forth full many a lay,
So that no trifling drunkenness
  Can dare assert its sway.
Love, song, and wine's sweet drunkenness,
  By night-time and by day, —
How god-like is the drunkenness
  That maketh me its prey!

◆

X. MATHAL NAMEH.

BOOK OF PARABLES.

From heaven there fell upon the foaming wave
  A timid drop; the flood with anger roared, —
  But God, its modest boldness to reward,
Strength to the drop and firm endurance gave.
Its form the mussel captive took.
  And to its lasting glory and renown,
  The pearl now glistens in our monarch's crown,
With gentle gleam and loving look.

Bulbul's song, through night hours cold,
  Rose to Allah's throne on high;
  To reward her melody,
Giveth he a cage of gold.
Such a cage are limbs of men, —
  Though at first she feels confined,
  Yet when all she brings to mind,
Straight the spirit sings again.

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